Nananan Kiriko

Itaitashii Love

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MANGASCEENER - VISCANS - ILLUMINATI MANGA

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Painful Love - Part 3	Summer Soldier	Mugen
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Proofread (if it is) by: chie, Cyclobenze, dveth

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His Scent

Natsuo's scent. A perfume, that almost hurts the nose. Sharp, exciting.

Not from his skin. Not from his hair. Not from his pillow. Not from his clothes. I don't know where his scent came from, but still I remember Natsuo's scent precisely. It's been two years...

All this time I searched for it, and I finally found it. The olfactory memory never fails.

He was so incredibly alluring. Gently, enticing. Crazily sexy...

And I...

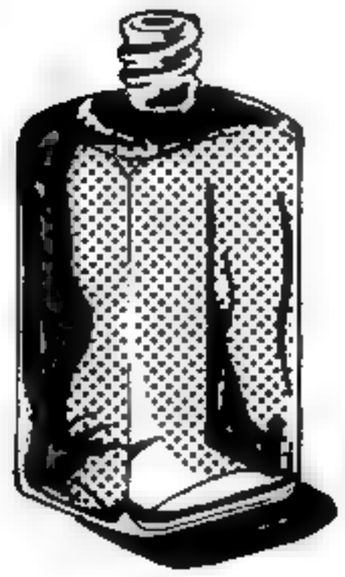
...was totally fixated on him.

Maybe I was only searching for Natsuo.

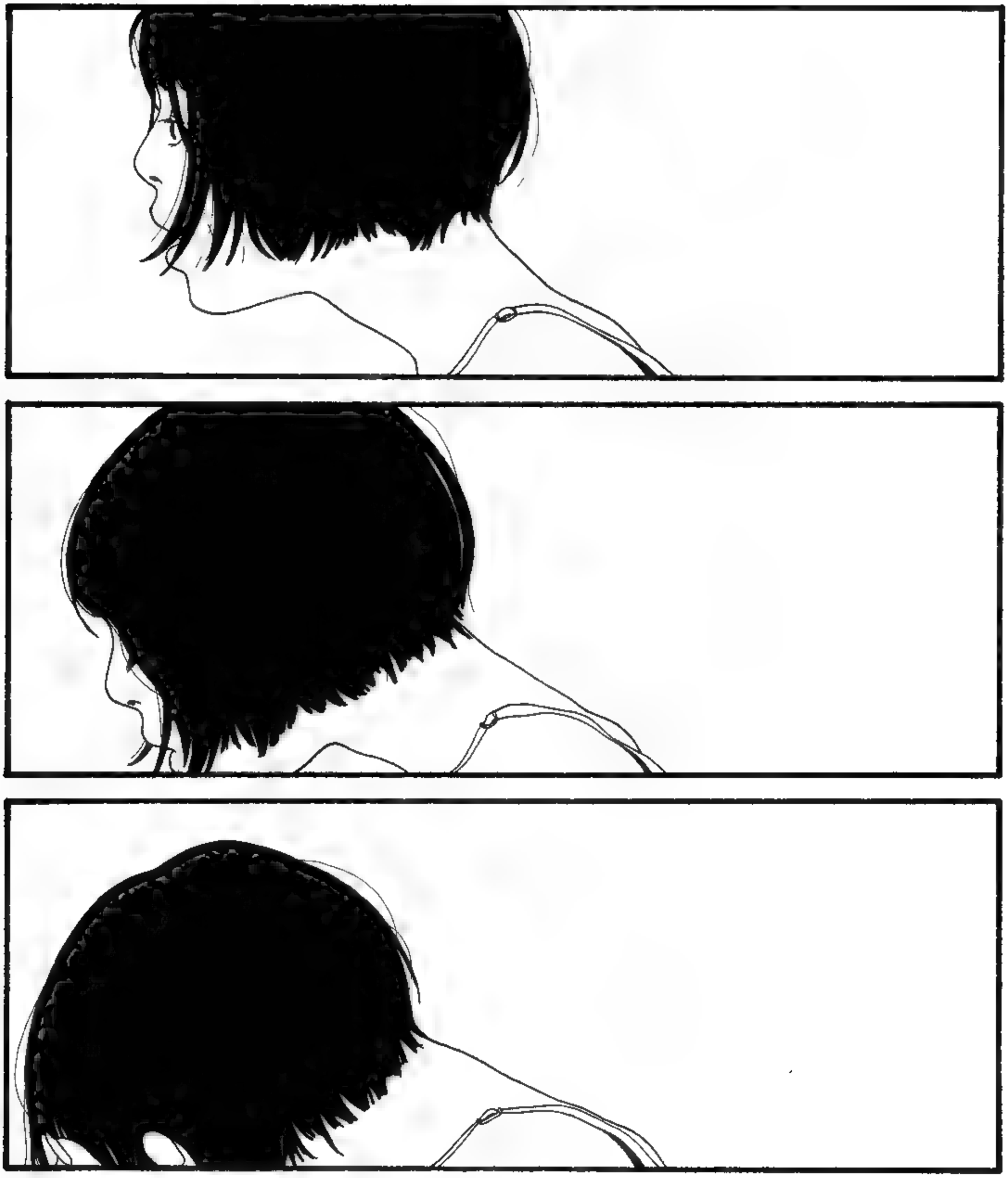
It's like Natsuo was back in my room, after two years...

I've found something that's very much like his scent. It's almost the same. In a glass bottle, a brown liquid.

In the circle of orange light the lamp gives off, the long slender legs under his body... Natsuo



Natsuo is back.

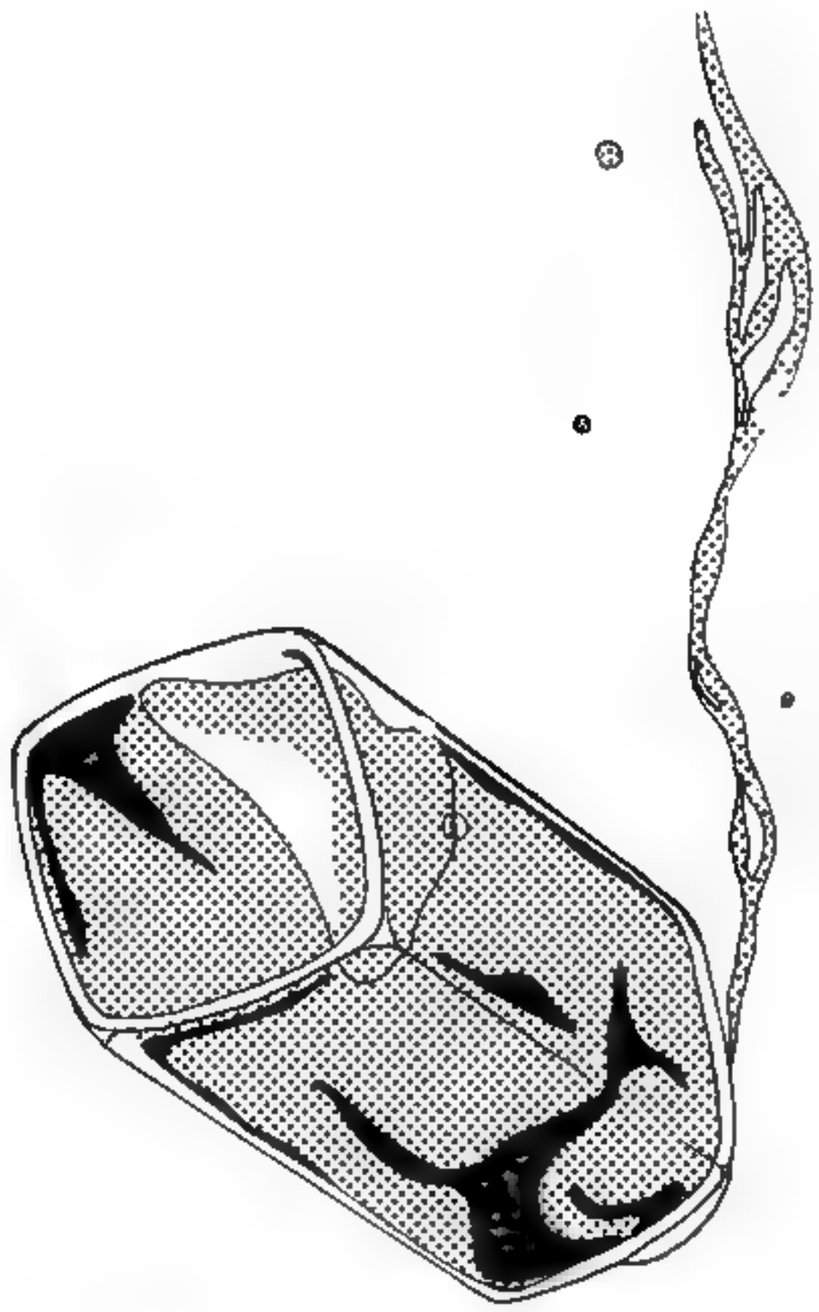


And suddenly, in that atmosphere filled,
almost smothered, by the perfume, I realize something.
It's so banal that it's almost hilarious.

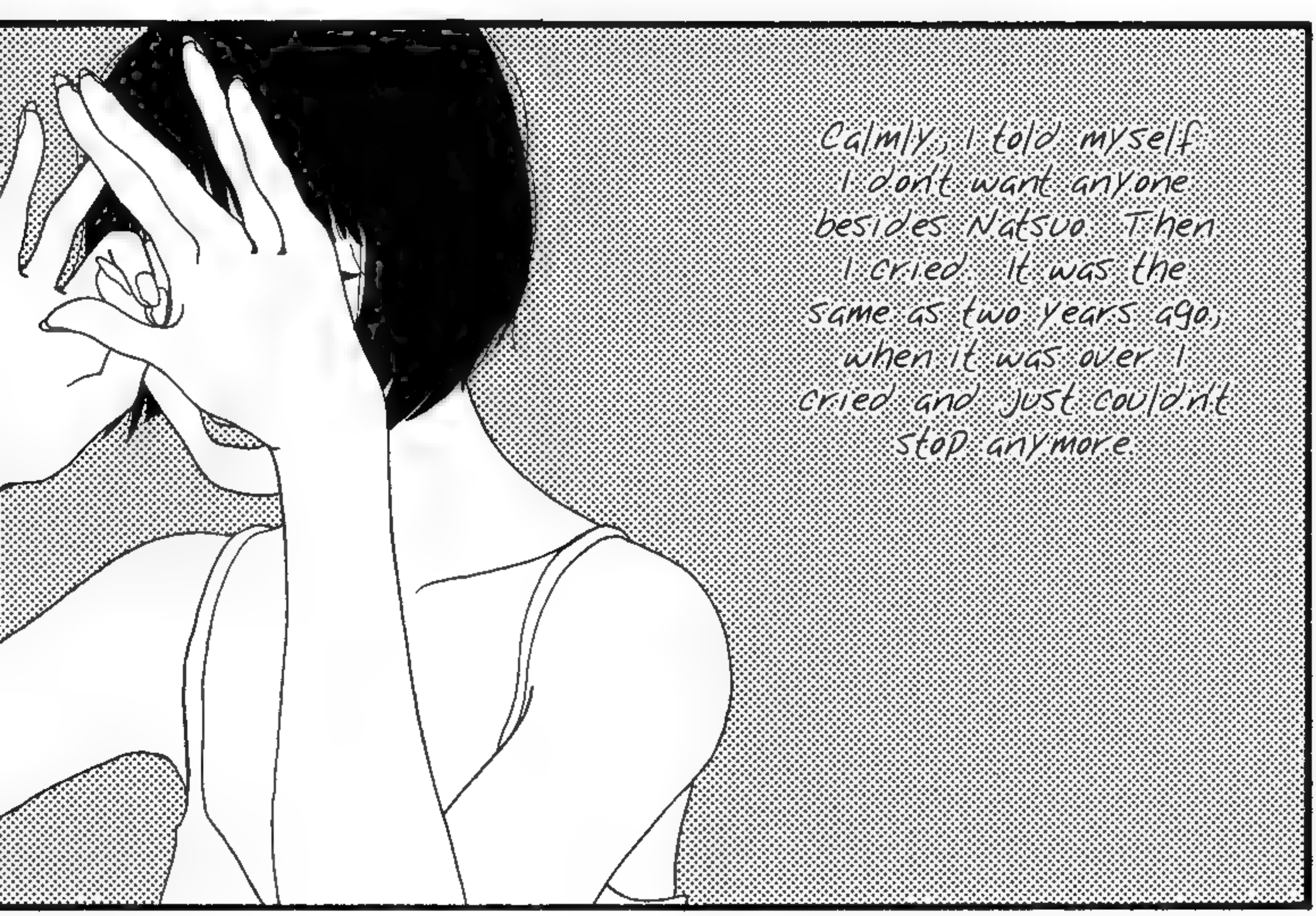
Two years ago,
I had smelled this same scent
in Natsuo's tiny bathroom.

A mixture of cheap
shampoo and the mold
between the tiles.

Natsuo's scent.



It belonged to no other human being. It resembled nothing else.



Calmly, I told myself I don't want anyone besides Natsuo. Then I cried. It was the same as two years ago, when it was over I cried and just couldn't stop anymore.

Heavy and Pop (♂)

Right now I'm holding all the aces.
I slathering my money around.
Everything's going great.
And I don't even work.
How do I do that?

What my trick is?

BUT I REALLY THINK YOU SHOULDN'T PAY EVERYTHING ON YOUR OWN.

THAT'S SO GREAT!

WOW, OGASA-WARA!

HA HA HA

HA HA HA

LEAVE OVER THE ONE WITH THE LONG HAIR FOR ME.

REALLY? YOU'RE SURE? NOT THAT IT'S TOO MUCH FOR YOU.

Gotta be a great feeling to be rich. Nice...

I'VE SCROUNGED FROM YOU MORE THAN ENOUGH. I'M INDEPTED TO YOU. COME ON, TAKE SOME.

OKAY.

DON'T WORRY.

HA HA HA

HEY, COME ON.

THAT'S ENOUGH, I'M FULL.

And from tommorrow on... I'm gonna be a Prostitute.

SO, HERE I AM!

AH, FOR REAL?

SO, YOU GOT A CAT? A FAT ONE? GEEZ...

I'm selling myself to a 60 years old hag for 60 bucks She Probably thinks that's funny. Dumb bitch.

I gotta bear with it...

I DON'T HAVE...

...THE COURAGE TO WEAR IT. IT'S SPECIAL.

WHY DON'T YOU DRESS BETTER?! I EVEN BOUGHT YOU A SUIT.

U-UH... 'K.

COME ON, LET'S GO.

AHHH...

LIKE THAT...

YEAH... MORE...

HAAA!

HIIII...

I'm doing her. I'm going all the way...

FUCK, I'VE OPENED MY EYES.

HUH... WHY DO YOU STOP SO SUDDENLY?

Reality →

Hn...

Hng...

Hng...

I PUT IN THREE FINGERS ...

YESTER-DAY, THAT CHINATSU HAD A DAMN GREAT PUSSY...

HNG!

HNG!

I'm dying! Really!

UARGH

AWH

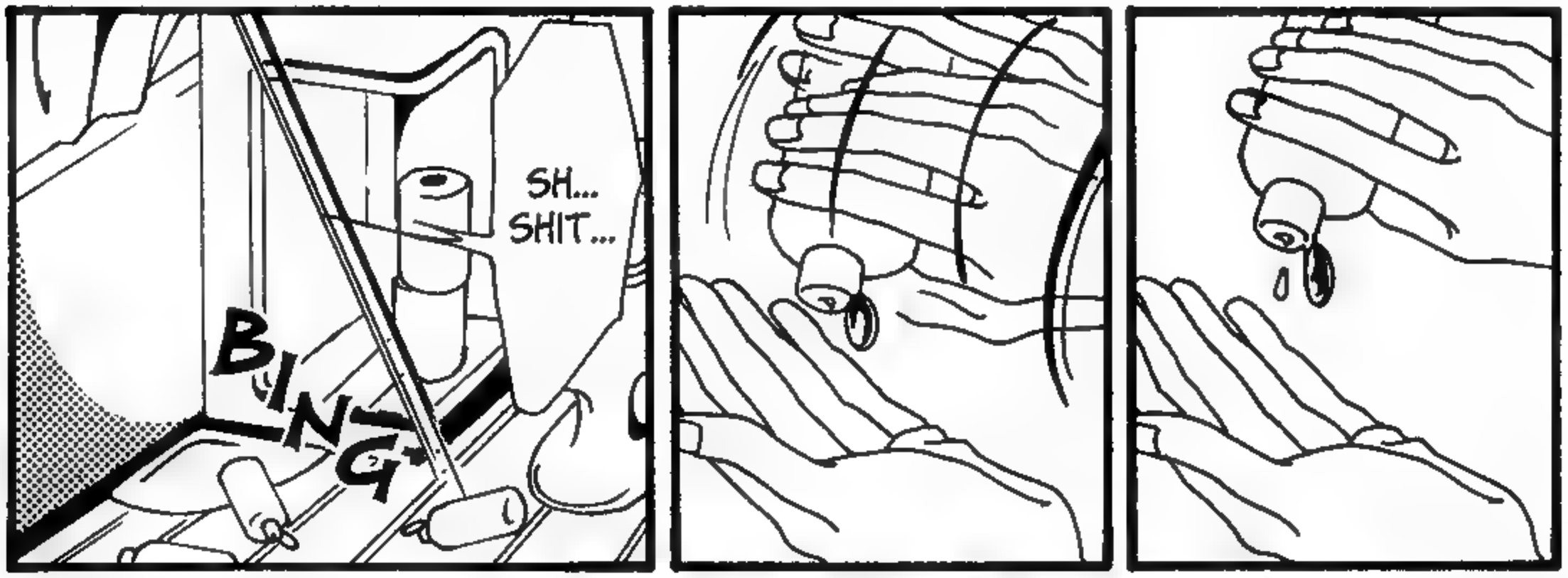
OHHH

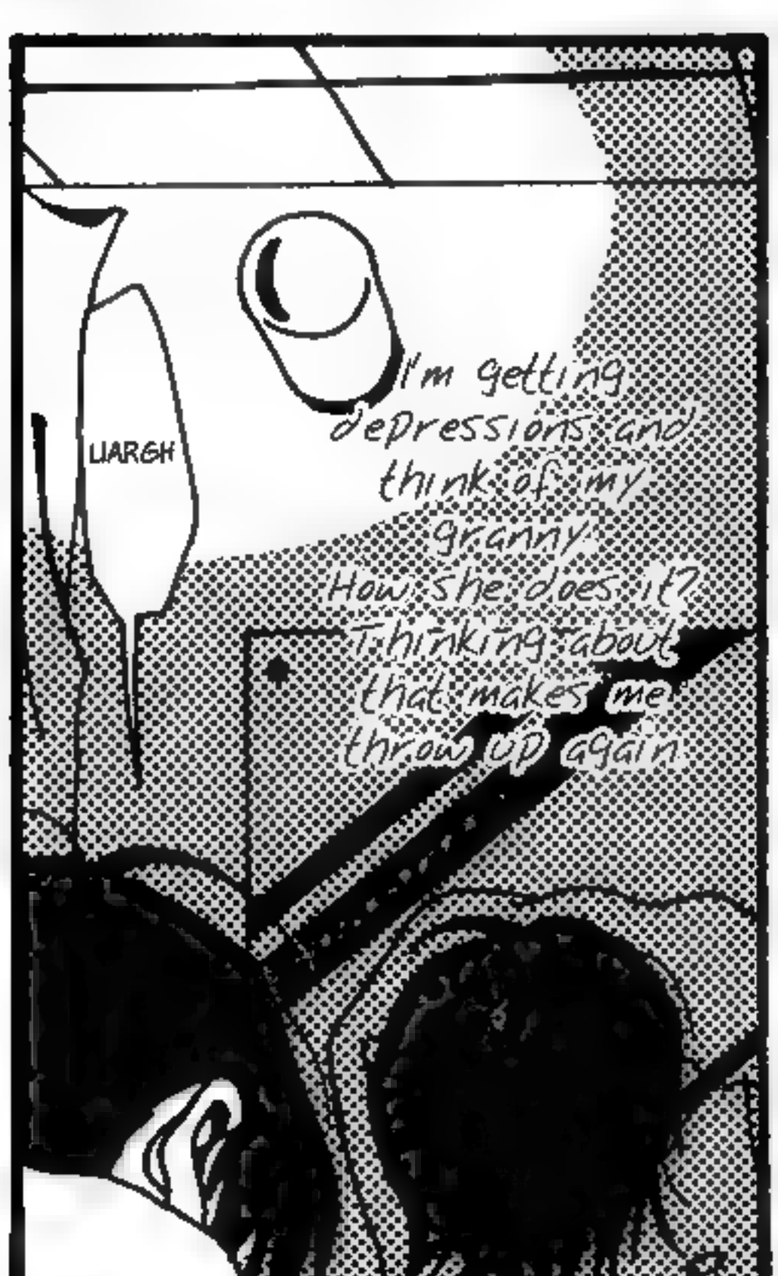
OHH

I feel like I'm in Hansel and Gretel. Horrible.

I'm barfing my heart out

I feel dizzy.





The moaning of that hag sounds like the chuckling of a hen. And I gotta hear it from so close to her.
OH NO... YOU'RE DRIVING ME CRAZY!
I'M GONNA GO INSANE!

I'm washing and washing and washing myself

I'm dying! really!

NO MORE! NEVER AGAIN.

I understand you. I respect you. I feel like crying.

Thus far I've always looked down on them; those bitches spreading their legs for any shitty geezer. But I should really admire them. And they even do it for free.

Why can't I just banish this day from my mind?

HA HA HA HA HA HA HA HA!

HE HE HE HE HE HE

STILL ...

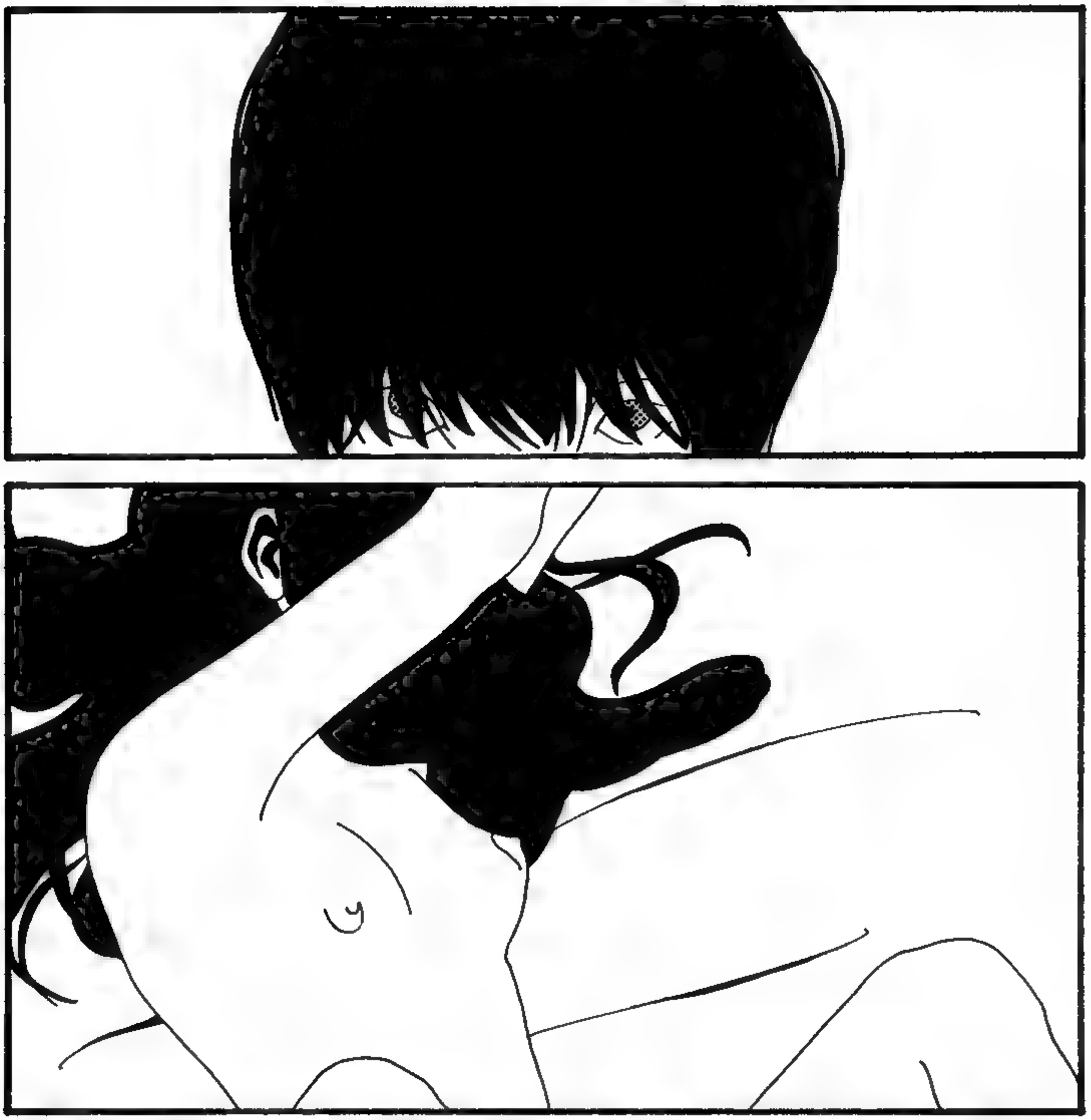
Still, those bucks are nice.

And that's why I'll probably continue.

I'LL MOVE TO A THREE-ROOM FLAT SOON.

OH MY GOD.

Painful Love



That moment, right before the black cloth was placed before my eyes, I saw the expression in his eyes, was so intense.

He seemed to permeate my mind, as if he could look right into my head. With that empty, apathetic, crazy glare. He had such beautiful eyes.

YOU'RE NOT EVEN WET!

COMPLE-
TELY DRY.
WHAT'S UP
WITH YOU?

REALLY?

YOU DON'T
FEEL LIKE
IT? THEN
LET'S STOP.

TELL
ME...

...CAN'T YOU HURT ME A BIT?

HIT ME. CHAIN ME.

AND THEN COM-FORT ME.

WHAT?

HURT YOU...?

"BITCH! HOE! CUNT!"

INSULT ME. HUMI-LIATE ME.

I'D BE A TOTAL ASSHOLE IF I CALLED YOU THAT.

WOW!

HOW COME YOU KNOW WORDS LIKE THAT?

I COULD NEVER DO THAT.

CAUSE I LOVE YOU.

IT WAS SO GOOD TO FUCK HIM.

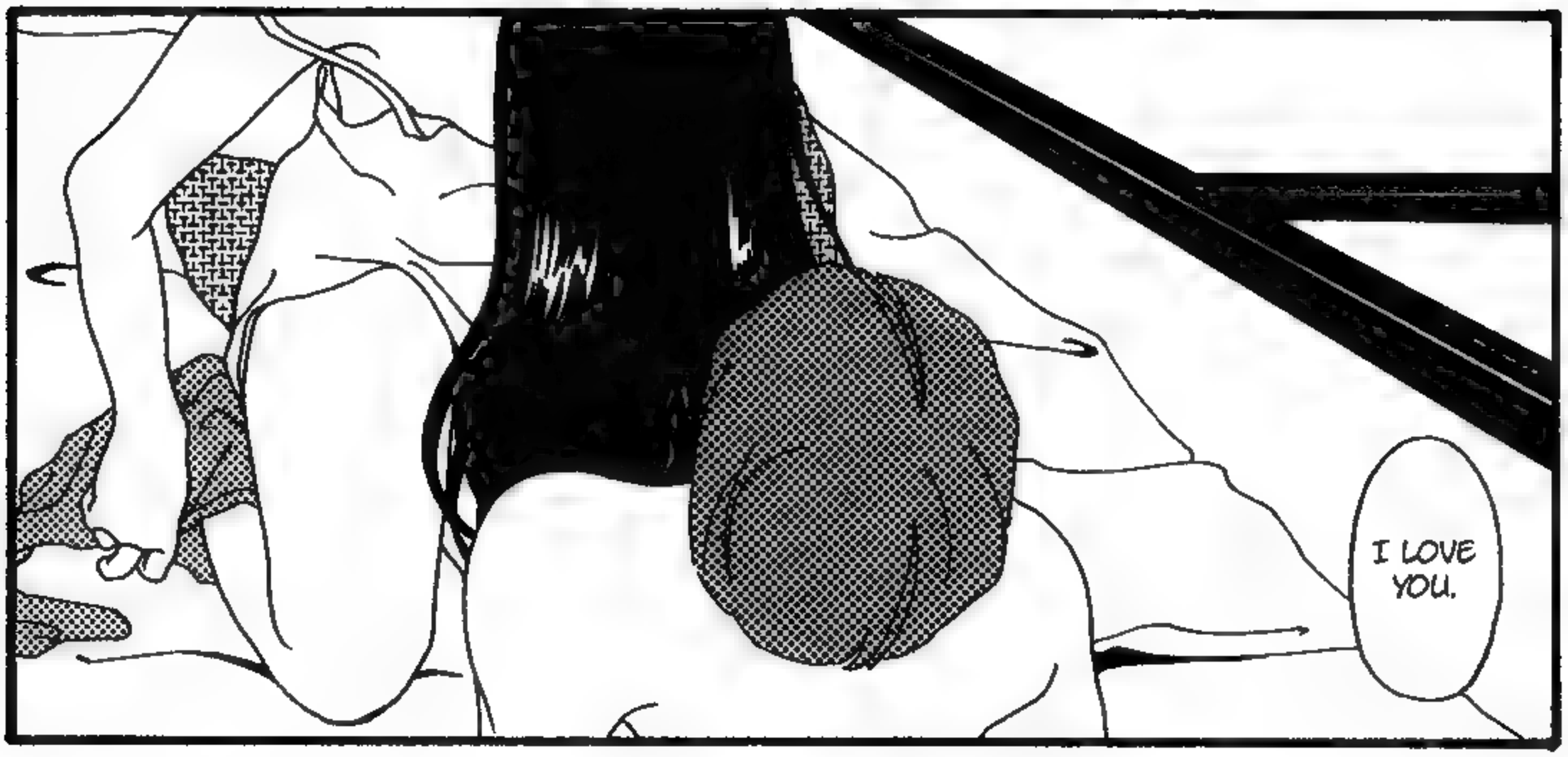
SO MUCH BETTER THAN YOU.

AND I, I CHEATED ON YOU...

I THINK WE SHOULD BREAK UP.

JUST A JOKE.

IT WAS A LIE!
SORRY.
I JUST WANTED TO TEASE YOU A BIT.


I LOVE YOU.

So very much!

That expression was so intense...

Holiday

my boyfriend was totally done for

I'M GONNA AIR THE FUTON, SO GET UP.

DON'T SLEEP ALL DAY.

C'MON, GET UP.

...

HMM...

ANYTHING ELSE?

I JUST VACCUMED THERE. JUST GET OUT OF MY WAY, WILL YA?

STOP! DON'T GO THERE.

I've been sharing my flat with him for two years

BUARK... THAT LOUSE REALLY NEEDS TO BE CLEANED.

BUT I WANTED TO WEAR IT TODAY.

And I know the reason.

He's goofing off all day

...

When he cleared the mailbox, he saw the letter

He hid it in a magazine and took it along. And since then

His ex sent him a letter: "I'm gonna get married..."

"Why the fuck do you tell him? He's not yours anymore!" That's what I felt like telling that bitch face to face.

I THINK THAT BAND...

THAT BAND 'SUGAR'...

WELL...

..he's been acting weird..

HMM, I THINK...

HELL, IT'S GREAT.

THAT SONG 'WEDDING BELL'...

IT'S NICE...

SOMETHING REMINDS ME OF THAT...

I USED TO LIKE ONE OF THE SINGERS BACK THEN, YOU KNOW...

He tried to beat around the bush, but it was obvious

It's not that singer you're thinking about, but your ex, right? That's pissing me off so much!

HEY...

...

TELL ME.

US HAVING A DAY OFF AT THE SAME TIME DOENS'T HAPPEN TOO OFTEN, SO WHY DON'T WE GET OUT A BIT?

WHAT?!

OKAY.

I'M HAVING MY PERIOD.

WE CAN DO IT ON A TOWEL.

HHH

HHH

I feel like I'm some toy. That's awful.

I'm no sex doll. And I'm not the woman you're fantasizing about.

He wants to keep his eyes closed, that's why he wanted me to be on top

What could he be thinking right now?

I hate her
It's my first time hating somebody I don't even know, yet I wish she were dead

But.

I'm also kinda jealous of her. Involuntarily I've gotten turned on, I'm wet.

And he still has his eyes closed and his face covered.

to be honest

Is he crying?

And then, after not having said anything for so long

he gently says...

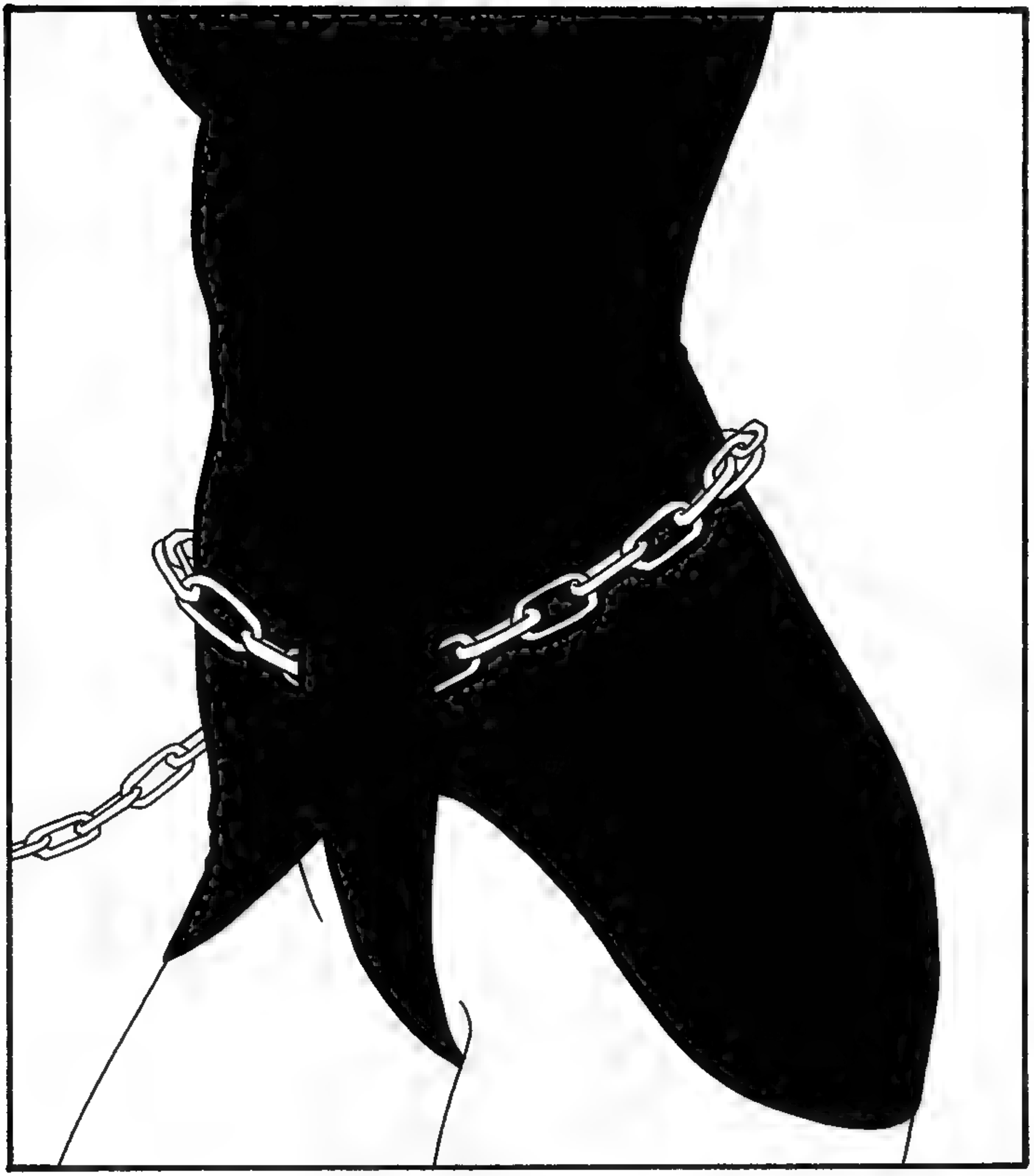
he gently said

"Stay with me, forever"

And I...

"Will the blouse have dried up till I go to work tommorrow?"

that's what I thought
And I cried



Heavy and Pop (♀)

AAAHHH
...

I WANT US TO CUM TOGETHER, UNDER-STOOD?

OPEN YOUR MOUTH MORE, YOU GOTTA MOAN!

BE LIKE THE HORNY WOMEN IN THE MANGA.

UAHH
...

HAH!!!

BOTH AT THE SAME TIME ...!

YOU SHOULD REALLY STOP DOING THAT.

I WANNA GO TO THE SPA. I WANNA HAVE FUN.

DON'T YOU LIKE PRETTY CLOTHES? HAVING ENOUGH MONEY FOR A GREAT HAIRDO? A COMPLETE BATHROOM, INSTEAD OF NOTHING BUT A SHOWER STALL.

WHY?

WHY ARE YOU ASKING?

...I THINK ONE SHOULDN'T TURN SEX INTO MONEY.

WELL ...

IT'S TOTALLY EASY. I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DON'T SELL YOURSELF, YUKA.

RIGHT, BUT...

...

UNBE-LIEVABLE. YOU SOUND LIKE MY GRANDMA.

UH- OH, YOU REALLY JUST SAID "LOVE"?

IN MY OPINION, ONE SHOULDN'T SLEEP WITH MEN THAT DIS-GUST YOU.

FOR ME SLEEPING WITH SOMEONE IS AN EXPRESSION OF LOVE.

DOESN'T IT BOTHER YOU TO DO SOMETHING THAT MIGHT CAUSE YOUR BOYFRIEND PROBLEMS?

IF YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH A MAN, WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?

BUT ...

DON'T BE SO SURPRI-SED.

JUST ADMIT IT, YOU DON'T EVEN WANT TO UNDER-STAND ME.

THEN I'D BETTER STOP TALKING.

BUT ISN'T THE FACT THAT YOU WANT TO LOOK GOOD, AND WEAR NICE CLOTHES PROOF THAT YOU'RE SEARCHING FOR SOMEONE TO LOVE?!

JUST SO YOU KNOW, I'M NOT IN LOVE WITH ANYBODY RIGHT NOW.

THANKS FOR THE GOOD ADVICE!

UH, IT'S AL-READY THAT LATE?!

I GOTTA GO; GONNA MEET MY DARLING.

WELL.

SO, BETTER HURRY UP!

I WANNA UNDRESS YOU MY-SELF.

WHAT?

STOP IT. JUST DO WHAT I TELL YOU TO.

YOU'RE SO EXCI-TING, I ALMOST FORGOT MYSELF...

RIGHT, FIRST I GOTTA PAY UP, DON'T I?

UH ...

COME HERE.

OH?!?

HERE'S 100,000 YEN, AND SOME CHANGE. PLEASE CHECK THAT IT'S ALL THERE.

WELL... THEN...

COME HERE...!

I'M ACTING AS IF I'M IMPRESSED. BUT IF YOU GOT SO MUCH MONEY, WHY DON'T YOU GIMME SOME MORE?!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID.

I'M NOT A YOUNG MAN, BUT I GOT A SHITLOAD OF EXPERIENCE, MISSY.

UGH! I'M FEELING SICK!

In fact...

OH, THAT'S GOOD! OH, THAT'S GOOD!

AH, THAT'S GREAT... DEEPER ...

MHH... MHH...

He had a deep voice, and I liked to make make him scream with pleasure, with that voice.

With the man I loved, I did things like this without having to be asked

HUH? YOU WANT ME TO CARESS YOU, RIGHT?

BUT I WON'T.

It felt good, just to lie there beneath him!!

But most of the time, it was him that pleased me

BUT THAT'S ALL OVER ...

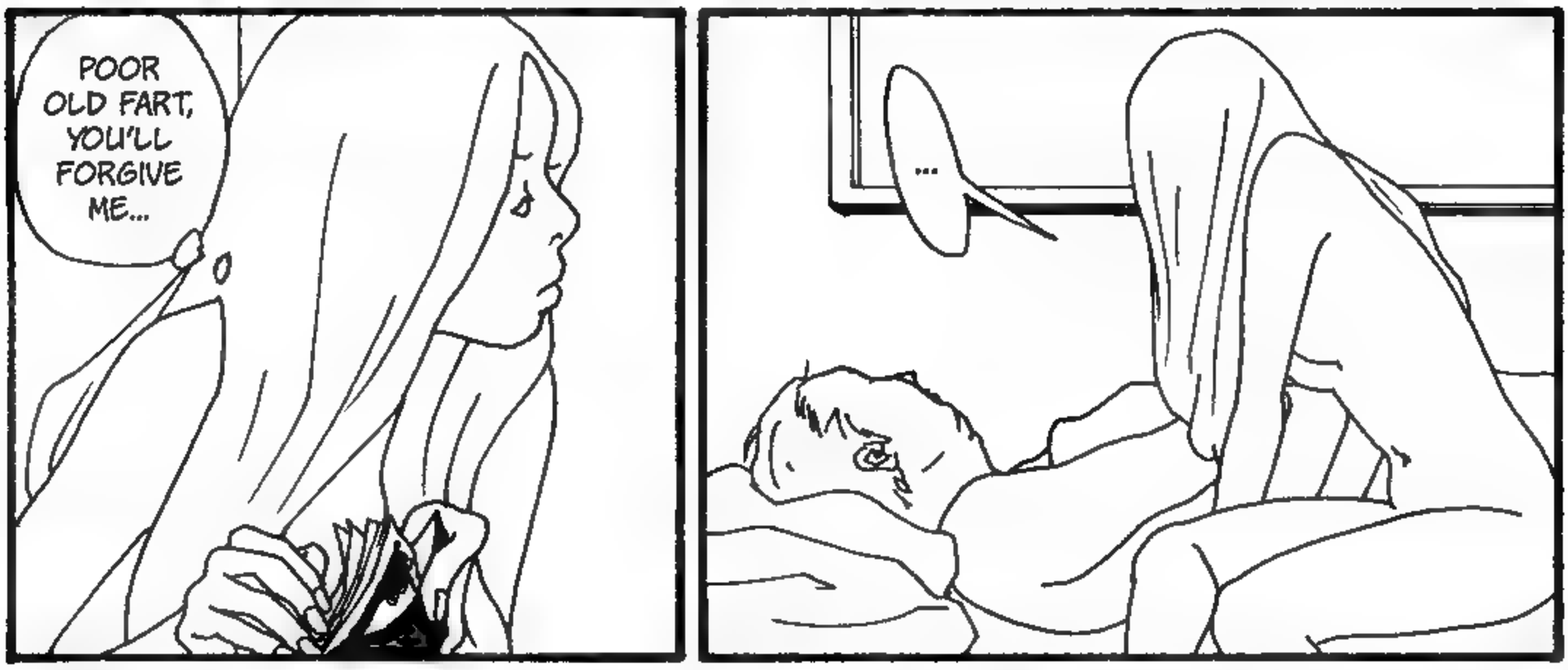
YOU'RE SUCH A NICE GIRL, THAT'S GOOD.

I LIKE TO LET YOUNG GIRLS DANGLE.

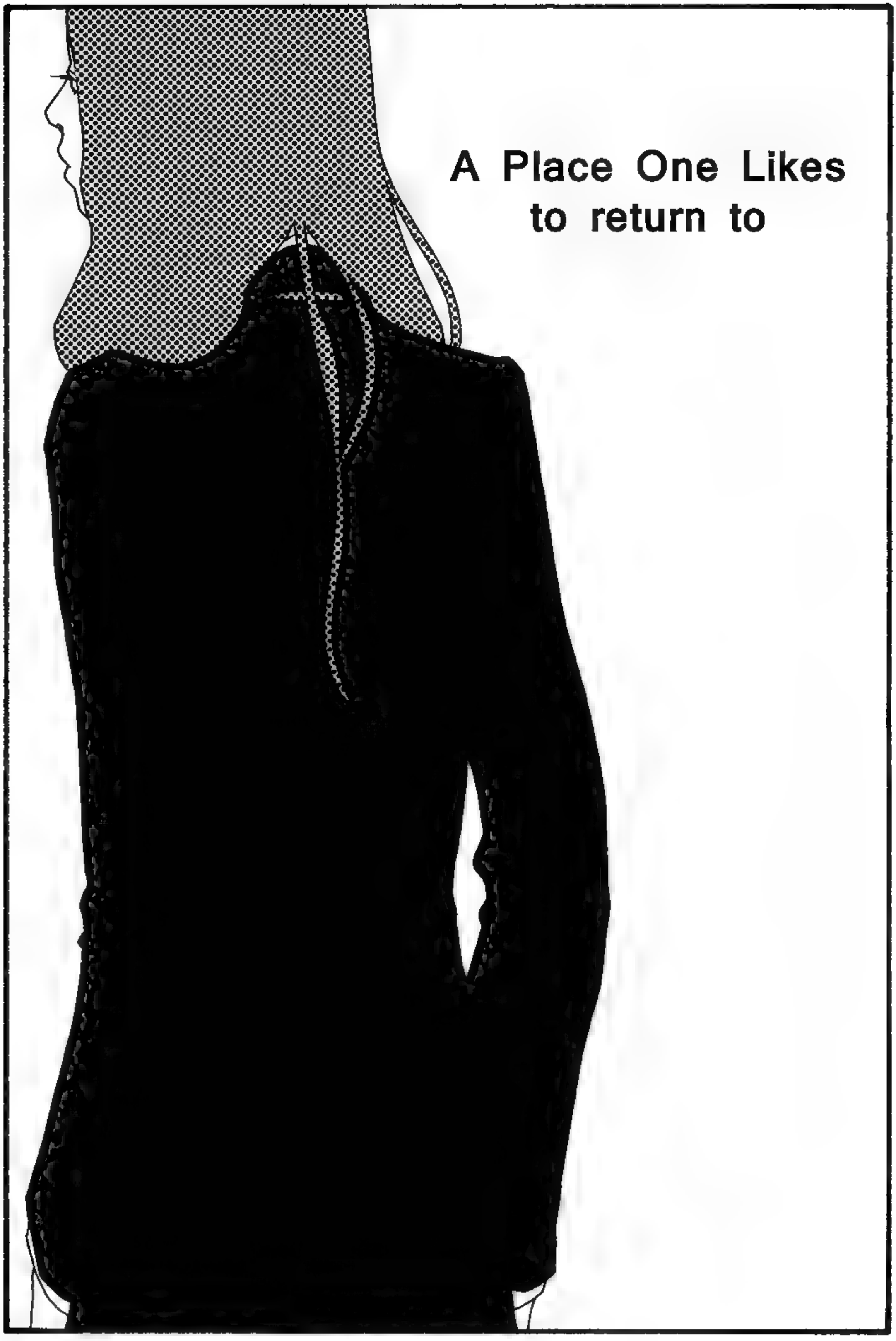
I WANNA MAKE YOU HOLD OUT.

Falling in love, that whole talk about love, it's just dumb. And even more, how everybody talks about it.

...But... it's good, that people can talk about it.



That evening I collected my redundancy payment. Then I never returned, to that place where one sells sticky, grubby sex.



A Place One Likes
to return to

I'm gonna go out shortly
Cook yourself, there's
miso soup in the pot.

I SPLIT UP WITH MY GIRLFRIEND.

YOU WERE DATING FOR QUITE THE TIME.

MORE THAN TWO YEARS, RIGHT?

YEAH, THAT ONE.

WHICH ONE? THE...

...ONE YOU HAD AFTER WE HAD BROKEN UP?

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

REAL-LY...?

OKAY ...

WELL ...

I GOT A BOY-FRIEND.

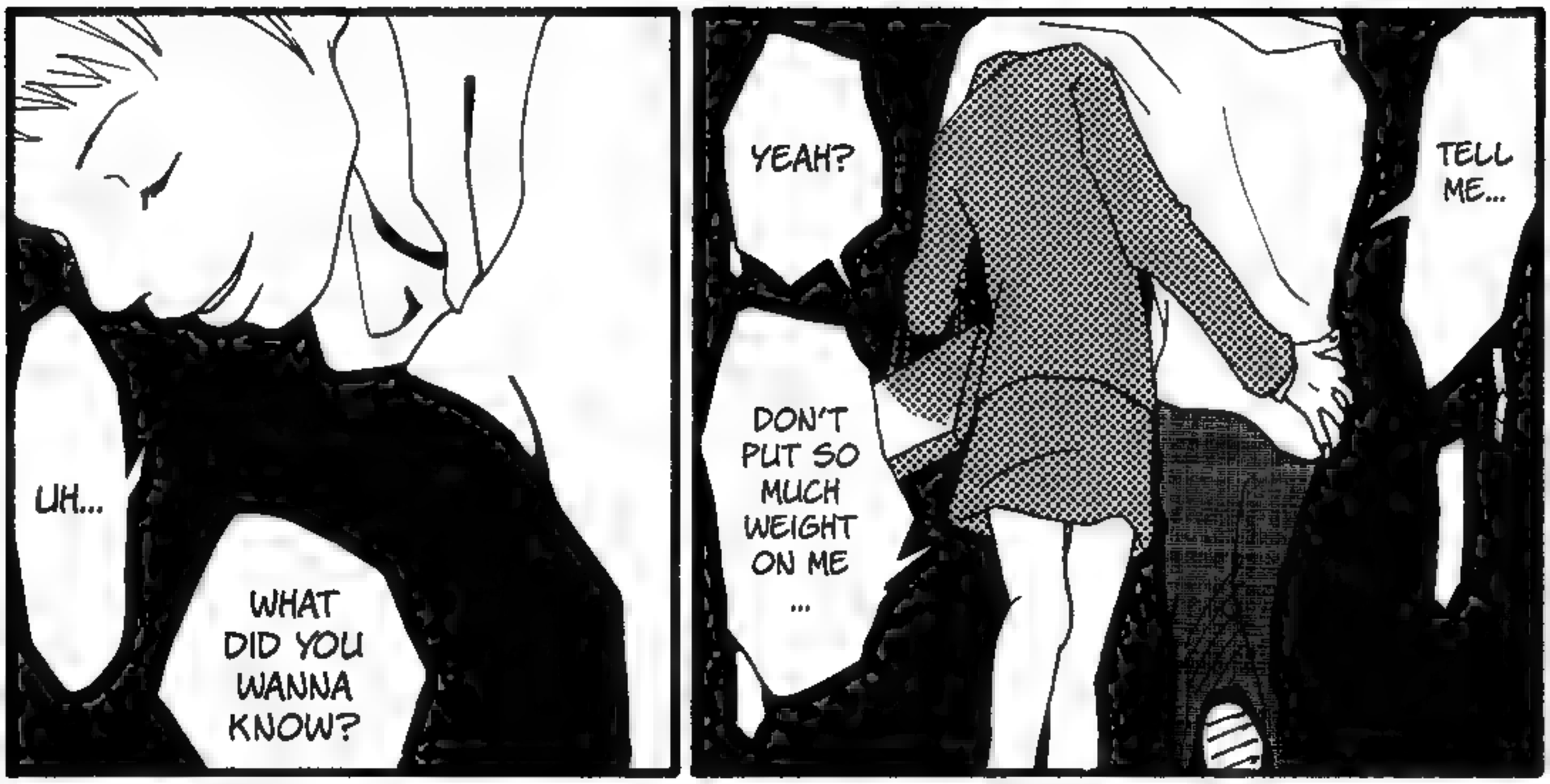
I'M VERY FONT OF HIM.

HA HA HA

YOU CAN'T EVEN STAND STRAIGHT ANYMORE?

IN-CREDI-BLE...

FLL



I don't know what I want.

His face, his hands, his ears, his shoulders, even his feet, his back...

Yeah... It's true... I like him...

AM I A STAND-IN FOR HER?

DID YOU WANNA DO IT 'CAUSE YOU WERE DOWN?

LISTEN...

IF IT'S LIKE THAT ...

AND NOW YOU WANT ME TO TAKE HER PLACE?

SHE WAS MORE IMPOR-TANT TO YOU.

YOU COMPARED ME TO HER ALREADY WHEN WE WERE STILL TOGETHER.

I FELT LIKE I HAD TO SEE YOU,

...I'D HATE THAT BITCH! I'D FEEL LIKE KILLING HER!

SO SIMPLE.

THAT'S ALL.

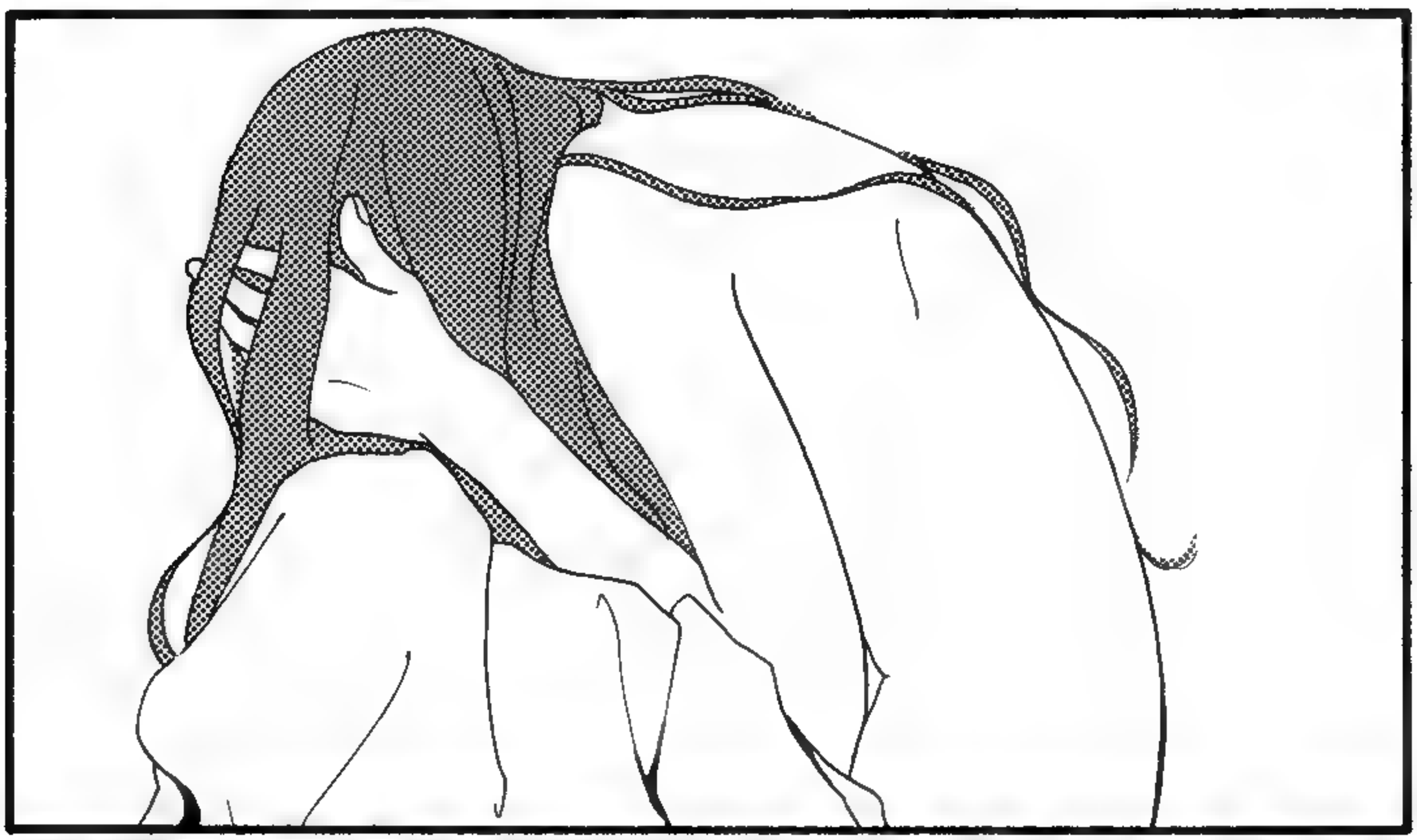
I don't know...

...what I want.

It's bumping in my head. I can't breath. I wanted to run away often...

...but being honest with myself...

I got a boyfriend I like very much. And I got an affair with my ex, that I was crazily in love with. I just don't know anymore, which of those two is more important to me.



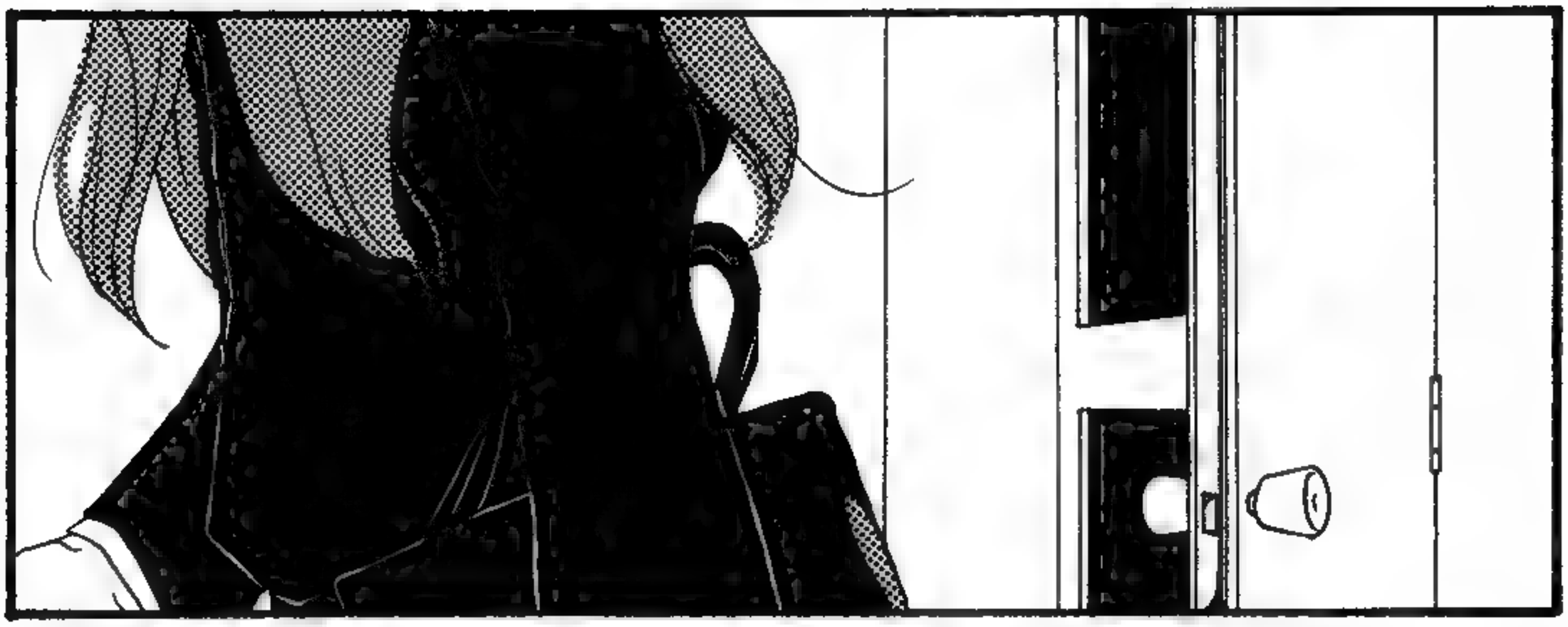
...I'm totally sure, that I want my ex.

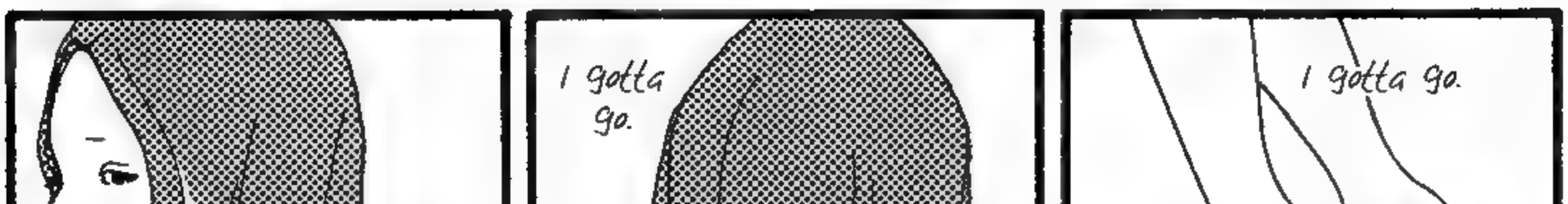
But thinking about his soft expression, when he sleeps besides me, about the scent of his pillow, the heat of his body...

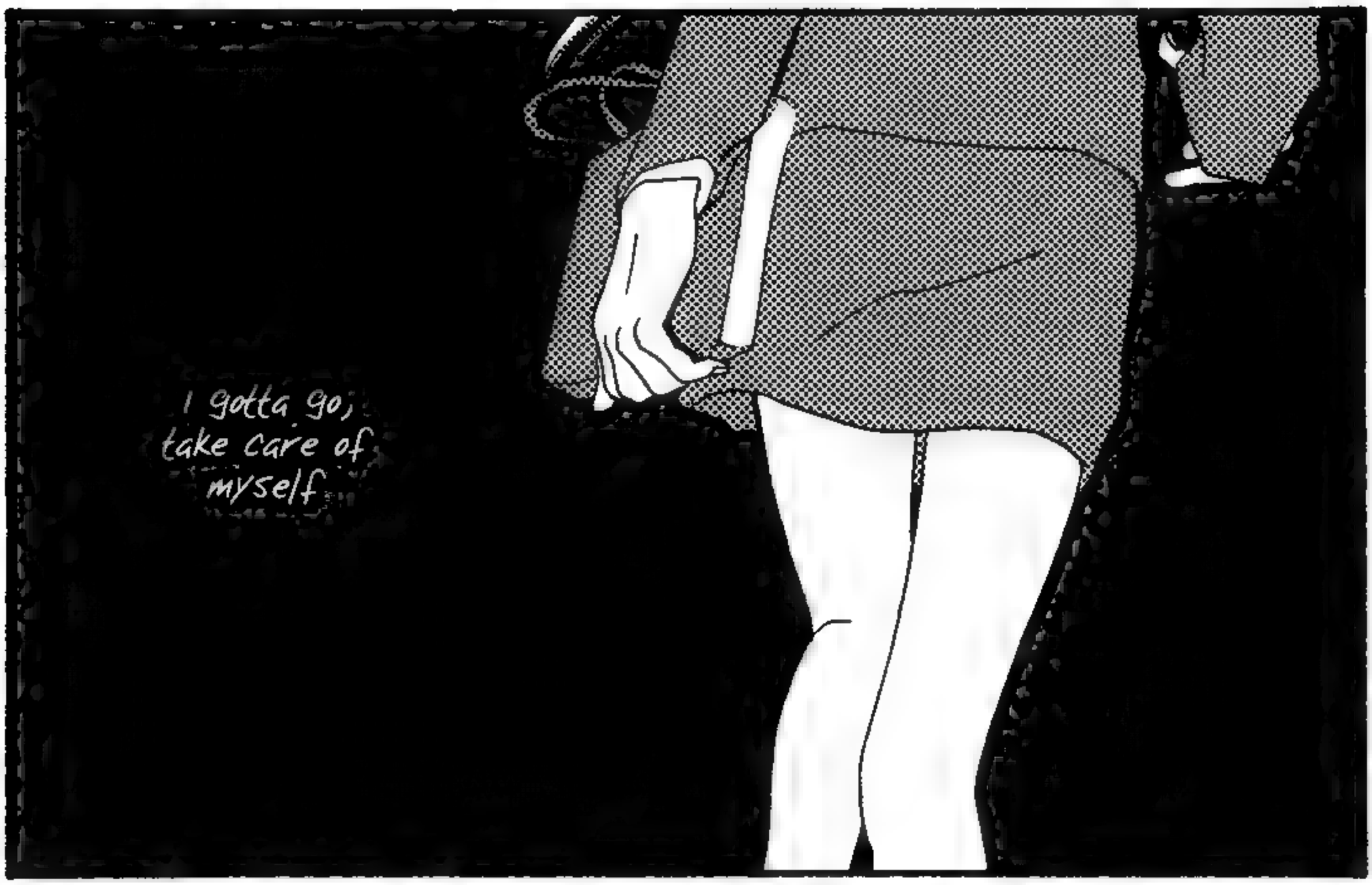
Either I hurt the other one, or I'll be hurt myself.

I know, hurting the other one would hurt me more.

I GOTTA GO.




I gotta go.
I gotta go.


I gotta go; take care of myself

This Silent Radiance I

I've seen Takae again.

When I approached him, he looked at me like he didn't know who I am. Then I mentioned the bar we had always visited at evenings, and he smiled so nicely

Just accidententially, after three years

NAH, WITH A FRIEND.

AHA.

YOU'VE COME HERE ALONE?

HEY, SHO!

HI, SHO!

'K I'LL ASK HER, IF SHE'S COMING ALONG.

WE WERE JUST ABOUT TO GO.

TELL YOUR FRIEND THAT WE'RE GONNA GO EAT RAMEN.

IKUMI!

I thought Right, he's much taller than me

LET'S GO, WE'RE GONNA EAT RAMEN.

COME ON, WHICH SIDE IS IT ON?

REALLY? NOT TO THE RIGHT?

HERE, ON THE LOOP, GO LEFT AT NO. 7.

JUST REPORT SICK.

I GOTTA GO TO WORK TOMMORROW.

A FRIEND OF MINE LIVES VERY CLOSE BY. WE CAN STAY OVER THERE.

WHERE AGAIN?

AT SUGI-NAMI'S.

THEY GOT REALLY NICE RAMEN.

TALK'S CHEAP...

SIX RAMEN WITH GARLIC.

NAH, STOP! FIVE, JUST FIVE!

I JUST LIKE TO SPOIL MY CUSTO-MERS.

YOU'RE A NICE LANDLORD!

400

BUT THAT'S REALLY TOO MUCH FOR ME!

DAMN, IT'S HOT!

UH!

HEY, YOU'VE REALLY USED A SHITLOAD OF GARLIC!

While he ate his noodles, Takae told me about his girlfriend, who's five years younger than him

SO, THIS IS WHERE MY FRIEND LIVES.

I GOT THE SENSE THAT IMMA SPIT FIRE LIKE A POWER RANGER SOON. AH NO, IT'S GODZILLA WHO'S SPITTING FIRE!

INCREDIBLE!

THAT STINKS!

I GOTTA BURP.

YOU DON'T?

YOU?

UGH! HAHA HAHA.

HEY, BREATHE ON ME.

FHHH

...

WELL?

...

FHHH

UH...

I had gotten jumped.
I was ashamed.

HA HA

NOW BOTH OF US STINK.

IF WE'RE TOO LOUD, HE'S GONNA GET ANGRY.

HEY, YOU'RE ALREAY ASLEEP?

WE DON'T NEED TO LOCK THE DOOR.

DO YOU HAVE AN ALARM CLOCK?

NO SHIT?! YOU REALLY WANNA GO TO WORK?

HERE AND THERE, ALONG-SIDE...

THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH PLACE FOR ALL OF US.

WHERE ARE WE GONNA SLEEP?

WHAT THE FUCK? I'M TOTALLY UN-COVERED!

LEAVE A BIT OF THE BLANKET FOR ME!

IT'S SO TIGHT!

MY GOD, HE'S ALREADY FALLEN ASLEEP!

SHO! THAT'S MY HAND!

YOU'RE FREE TO COME OVER, SHO.

YOU'RE LUCKY; LYING BET-WEEN TWO GIRLS!

Takae put his finger on my lips, so I'd be silent, and then he kissed me.

Without making a sound, we kissed. Then Takae put his hand under my skirt and whispered: "Wow, you're completely wet!"

This Silent Radiance II

IS IKUMI SLEEPING?

IF NOT, WE'LL PROBABLY REALLY DO IT.

...WE GOTTA STOP IT.

WE COULD DO IT IN THE TOILET.

NO CHANCE.

I GOTTA GO TO THE TOILET. BE RIGHT BACK.

WHY DO YOU FOLLOW ME?

KEEP IT DOWN.

...I HAVEN'T EVEN SAID ANY-THING.

HOW COULD I SLEEP AFTER SO MUCH GARLIC?

WELL ...

... THE OTHERS CAN SLEEP, TOO.

YOU'RE ALWAYS LIKE THAT, TAKAE?

OH, IT DEPENDS.

...

LISTEN, TAKAE...

WHAT? NO!

SOME YEARS AGO, I HAD REALLY FALLEN FOR YOU, DID YOU KNOW?

BUT YOU DID THAT WITH MANY GIRLS. NO PROBLEM IF YOU DON'T REMEMBER.

YOU EVEN KISSED ME ONCE.

REALLY?!

BUT I REALLY TOOK IT SERIOUSLY AND WAS INCREDIBLY LOVE-STRUCK.

THAT CHANGED QUITE FAST THOUGH...

BUT FROM NOW ON I'LL DEFINITELY NEVER FORGET YOU.

PRO-BABLY CAUSE YOU'VE GROWN INTO SUCH A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN.

SORRY, I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING.

THAT'S OKAY.

YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD AT LYING...

YOU THINK SO?

Then we kissed sexily.
And, then, in the toilet...

...with the back to the wall,
silently and hastily, we did it.

DAMN... WHAT TIME IS IT?

HM...

WHAT'S UP?

IKUMI!

IKUMI!

HM... I DREAMT SOME-THING.

YOU SLEPT WELL?

TELL THE OTHERS I SAID BYE.

SEE YOU.

BYE BYE, TAKAE!

WELL, I'M GONNA GO.

WE'LL MEET AGAIN, RIGHT?

At the subway station,
I chewed gum against my smelly breath.
As always, I chit-chatted with Ikumi.

"We'll meet again, right?"

2

I stood at the empty platform and kept trying desperately to not let our trivial talk stop.

Whenever we stopped talking,
I had to think of Takae.
I was about to take him seriously. I was shocked by myself.

Small and Lovely

EVERY DAY'S THE SAME, THIS MUST BE HELL.

I'M DONE FOR...

SCHHHH

UH...

...for a bunch of idiots...

An idiotic job...

THAT'S INCREDIBLE. WHAT AN ASSHOLE.

...AND HOW DO YOU THINK THAT DUDE RESPONDS? "SO YOU'LL PAY BACK ALL THE MONEY I SPEND FOR YOU IN RESTAURANTS?"

YOU GOTTA HEAR THAT.

SHE'S PISSED, 'CAUSE HE'S CHEATING ON HER ALL THE TIME. SHE TELLS HIM, THAT SHE'S GONNA BREAK UP...

Why don't they just care about their own business...?

...

I just don't give a fuck!

SO MY FRIEND SAYS...

ALL THIS FUSS, JUST TO SHOW HER FEMI-NINITY.

DON'T BE SO MEAN!

YOU? THAT'D BE THE WORST!

YOU'RE SO LUCKY. I'D BETTER HAVE BEEN BORN AS A MAN, TOO.

OH MY GOD...

SHIT!

Click

OH...

They are airing a crime story.
The plot is too complicated.
And I gotta work tommorrow,
and my room looks like shit.

I feel terrible,
slowly I'm starting to ask
myself why we live anyway.

AHHHH!

GLUCK

GLUCK

SCHNICK

IT'D BE SO NICE, IF IT WAS THE DAY AFTER TOMMORROW ALREADY!

BEFORE MEETING HIRO, I'LL GO SHOPPING AT MARUI*.

OH, THAT SONG'S NICE!

USING EARPHONES I CAN LISTEN TO MUSIC AT FULL VOLUME!

The day after tommorrow, at four p.m., I'll meet my darling, Hiro, in Shinjuku...

*A chain of department stores

I'M IN THE MOOD FOR A CORD TOP WITH SHORT SLEEVES AND A LONG, STRAIGHT SKIRT.

AND SHOES - SHOULD I TAKE HIGH-HEELS OR SNEAKERS?

OR SHOULD I FORGET ABOUT THE SHOES AND GET A PERM INSTEAD?

I'd like to do it in the bathroom.

AND CHANGE THE BED-CLOTHES.

AND GET RID OF THE MOLD IN THE BATHROOM.

BUT FIRST, IMMA CLEAN UP.

And then, watch Hiro pee.

He isn't really sexy, but he's so lovely.

CHOP-CHOP!

HEY, GET OUTTA HERE!

K'LONK

GLUCK GLUCK GLUCK GLUCK

I got a great view from my balcony.
And yesterday night...

...the Tokyo Tower stayed alight,
and I was so happy.

"It'd be so nice, if it was the
day after tommorrow already!".
Like a kid waiting for summer vacation.
I'm making many plans before falling asleep.
I'm in a good mood and think,
that this may be what happiness is like.

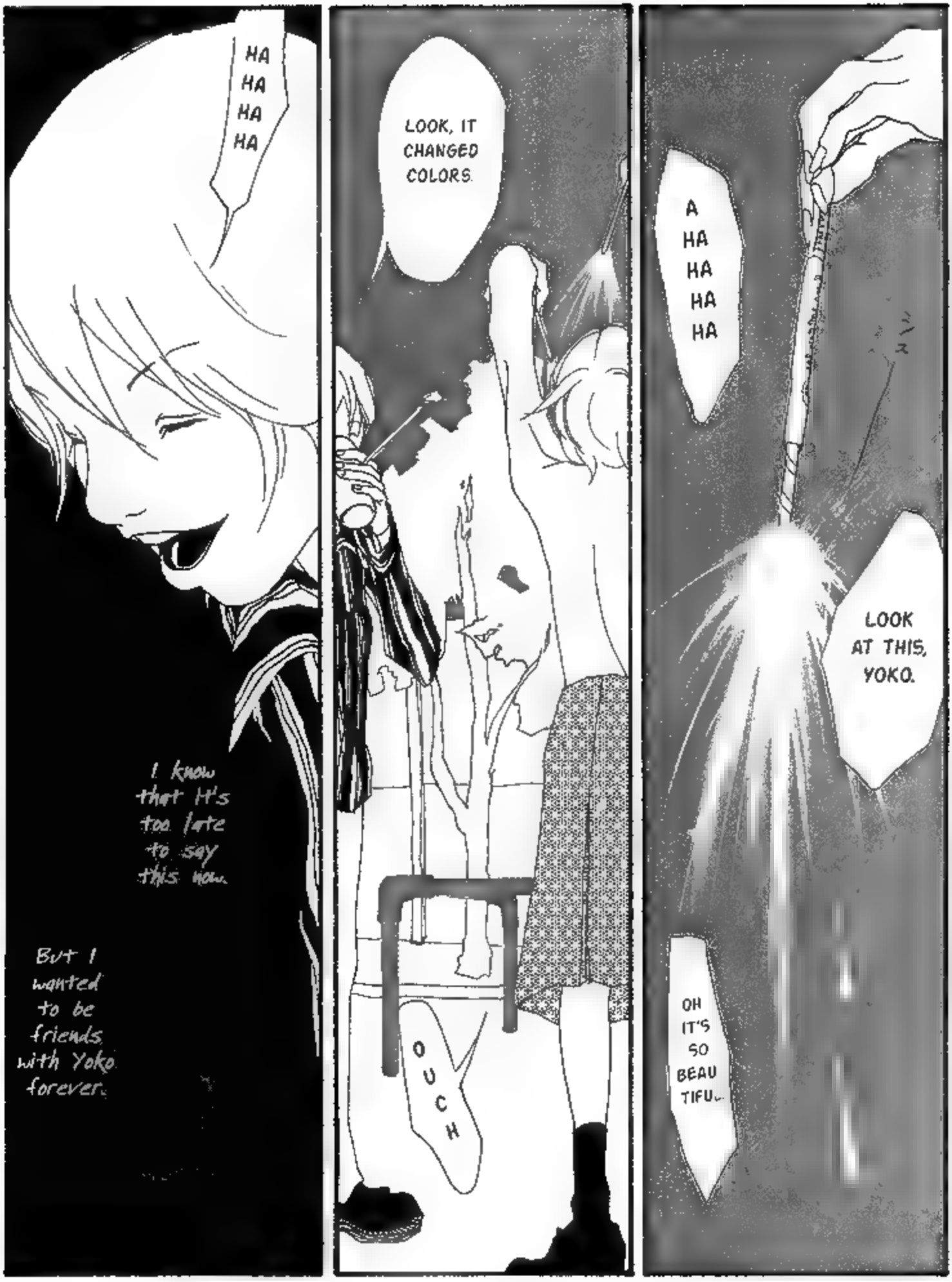
COME HERE, KITTY! TIME TO SLEEP!

COME ON!

AH, IT DOESN'T MATTER.

PEOPLE CAN SAY WHATEVER THEY WANT, I DON'T GIVE A FUCK.

At The Park


HA HA HA HA
I know that it's too late to say this now.
But I wanted to be friends with Yoko forever.
LOOK, IT CHANGED COLORS.
OUCH
A HA HA HA HA
シュ
LOOK AT THIS, YOKO.
OH IT'S SO BEAU TIFU

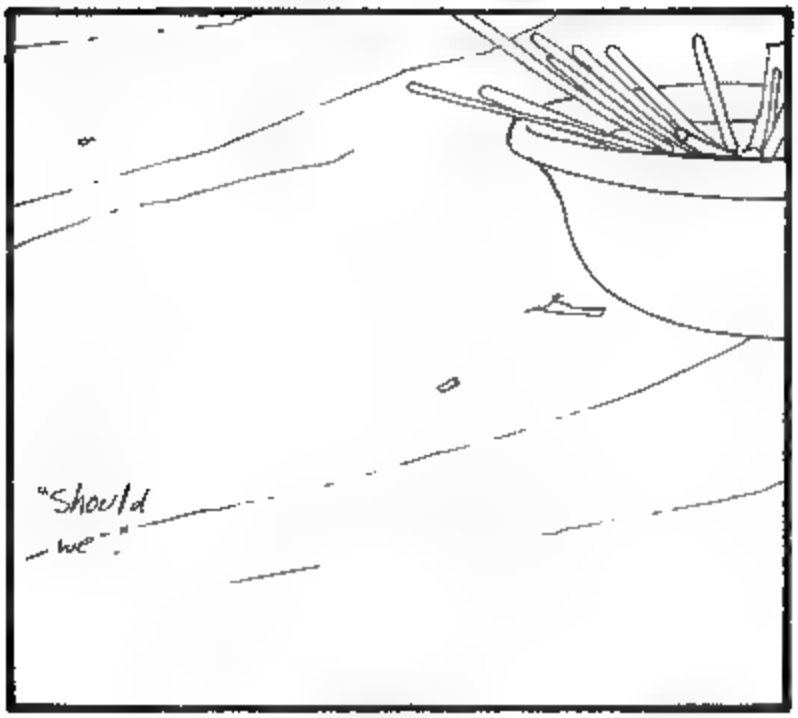
I invited Yoko to set off some fireworks at the park
I wanted to set rid of the ones I had left
I told her even though she bought them for this occasion
she told me that it was too cold for fireworks now but
she brought sparklers and beer
and came here anyway

I really like Yoko.
She's an important
friend to me
But this

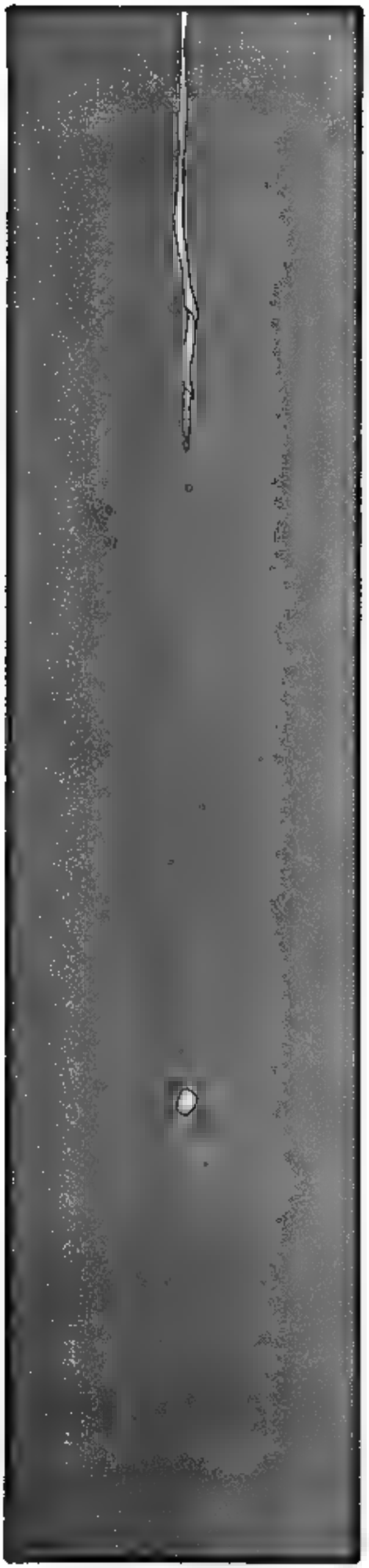
will most likely
be the last time
I see her

I should probably try to laugh.

Laughing is much better than crying


"Should
we-"

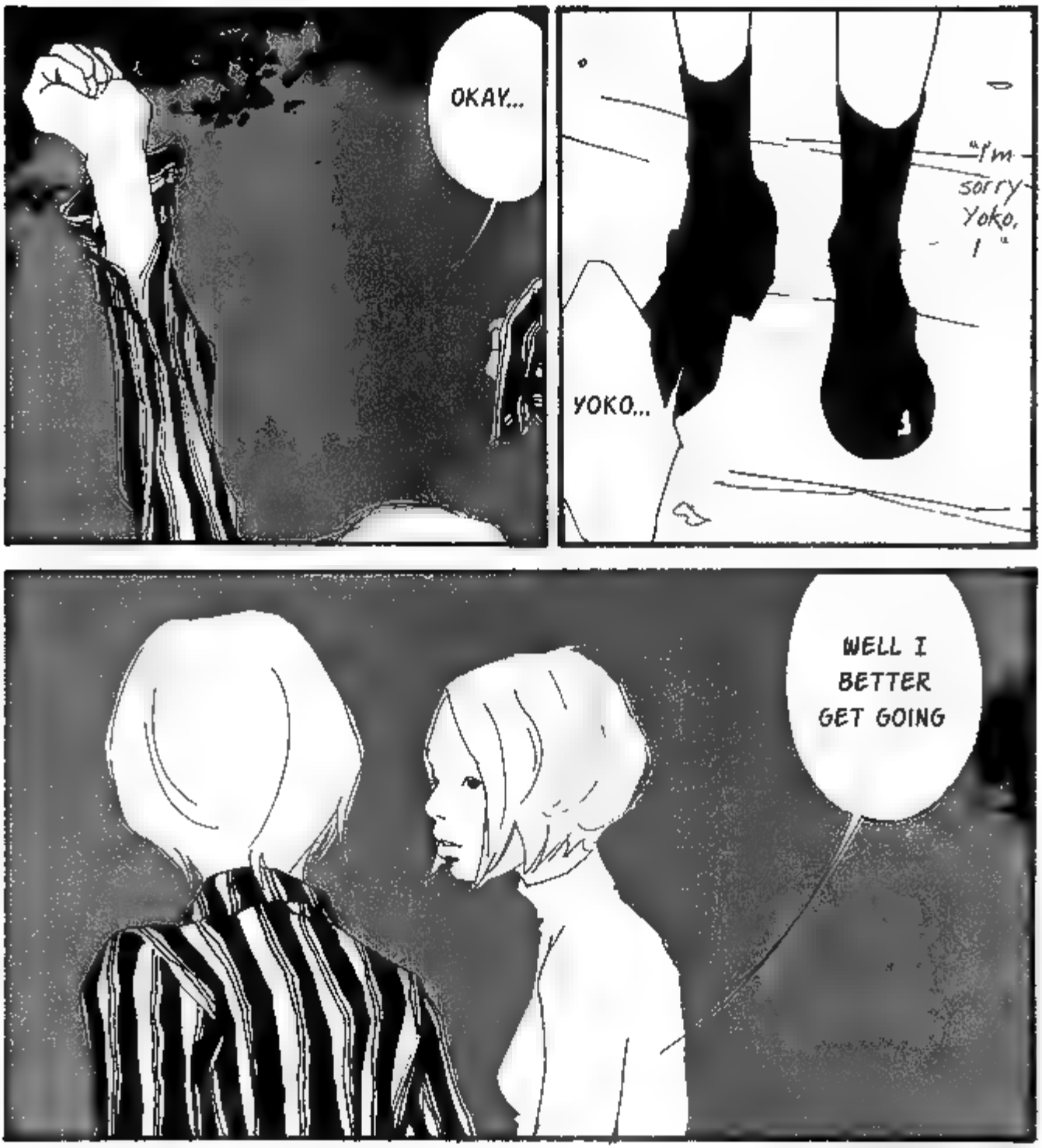
"Should we
go home
now?"

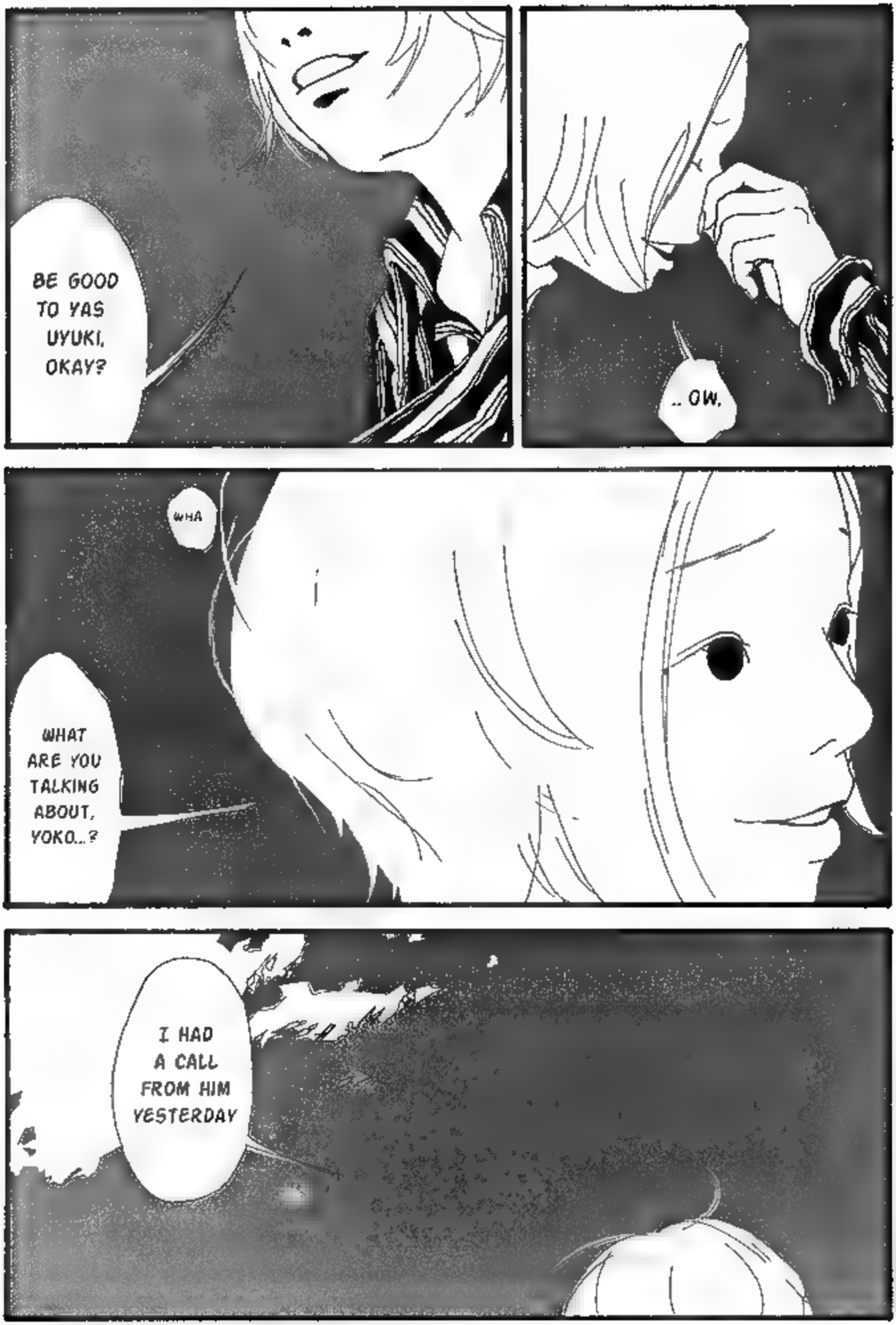


"Let's go home then."

"I'm sorry."

"Okay, let's go."




BE GOOD TO YAS UYUKI, OKAY?
.. OW.
WHA
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, YOKO...?
I HAD A CALL FROM HIM YESTERDAY

And I knew
but she revealed no tears until the end
That we would never see each other again.
Yoko was laughing
She was laughing as she walked away slowly I noticed her quicken her pace just as she was about to turn the corner and disappear from view.
It might have been easier for me if she had cried.
HE HE
YOU SNEAKY BITCH
HAHA, JUST KD-DING.

The Truth Behind Things I

In the beginning,
I was going out with Saeki.

When she left me for Kouji,
that I'm gonna admit, I actually felt freed.
I even felt pity for that poor guy.

KOUJI! PHONE FOR YOU!

HELLO?

プライベート
関係者以外
入禁止

CAN YOU FINISH BALANCING THE CASH, RYO?

YEAH, THANK YOU.

OKAY.

I WAS JUST DOING THE 1000 YEN BILLS.

PRIVATE. EMPLOYEES ONLY.

SEE YOU SOON.

IT'S GONNA BE HOME TIME SOON.

YOU'RE GONNA WAIT FOR ME?

YEAH ...

WANNA GRAB A BITE TOGETHER?

IF YOU WANNA DRINK SOME, I'M IN.

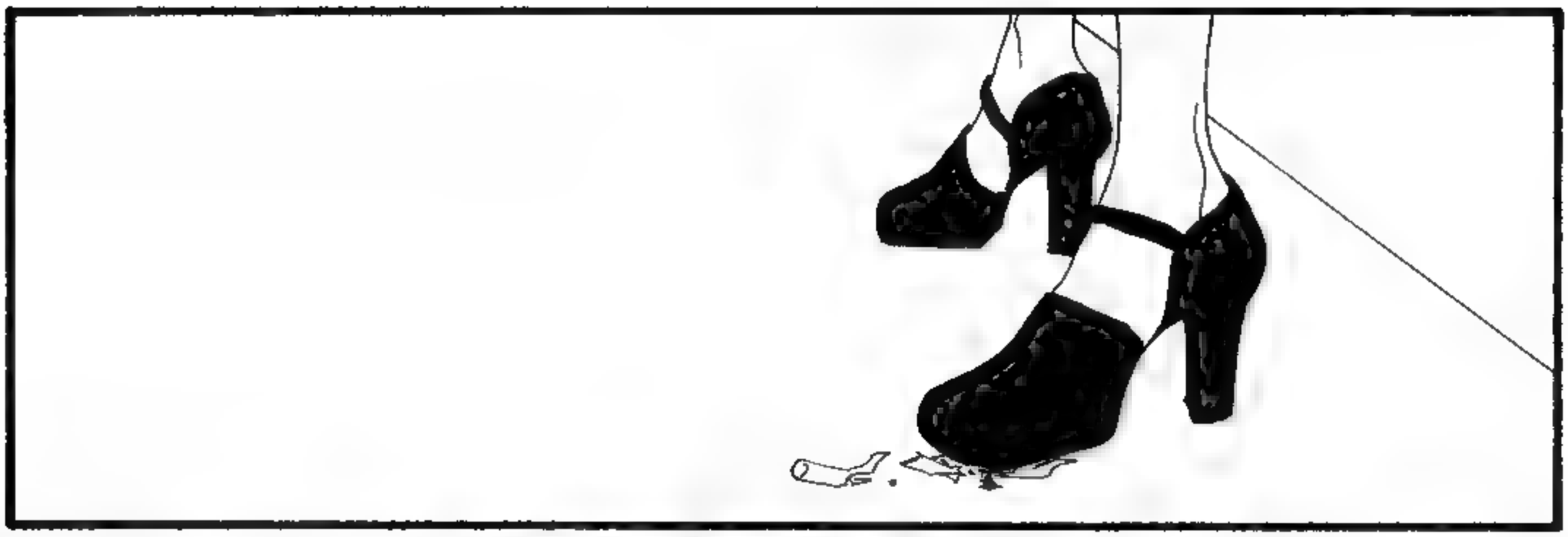
RYO! LONG TIME NO SEE.

YOU GOT A NEW GIRL-FRIEND, RYO?

...HE'LL COME ANY MOMENT...

WHERE'S KOUJI?

NONE OF YOUR BUSI-NESS!



"Asshole!"

"You're such an asshole!"

"More! More!"

"You love me, don't you?"

"More!"

"Then show me!"

THAT WOMAN'S REALLY DIFFICULT, ISN'T SHE?

WHY DON'T YOU SPLIT UP WITH HER? HAVEN'T YOU ENDURED ENOUGH?

AND THERE'S EVEN MORE TO COME, I TELL YOU.

SHE'S GOT A SCREW LOOSE.

HA HA

BUT SOMETIMES SHE'S INCREDIBLY NICE. LIKE... WHENEVER SHE'S NORMAL ...

SADLY THAT RARELY EVER HAPPENS...

BUT WHEN SHE'S IN A GOOD MOOD, I'M REALLY HAPPY TO HAVE HER.

YOU SURE YOU'RE NO MASOCHIST?

BESIDES ...

HM.

IF YOU THINK SO.

...WHEN SHE'S CRYING...

...IT'S SOMEHOW RELATED TO ME, TOO.

The Truth Behind Things II

...KOUJI, WHAT'S THAT?

OH, THAT.

IT'S NOTHING.

ON YOUR CHEEK.

WHAT?

THAT.

HM... YEAH...

HA HA HA

IT WAS HER, RIGHT?

LISTEN, KOUJI...

LET GO OF HER!

YOU'RE LISTENING TO ME, KOUJI?

WHY DO YOU STICK WITH HER?

IT'S A PITY.

I FEEL DIZZY.

YES-TER-DAY...

...I SLEPT ALL DAY.

LEMME DO IT.

GET DOWN!

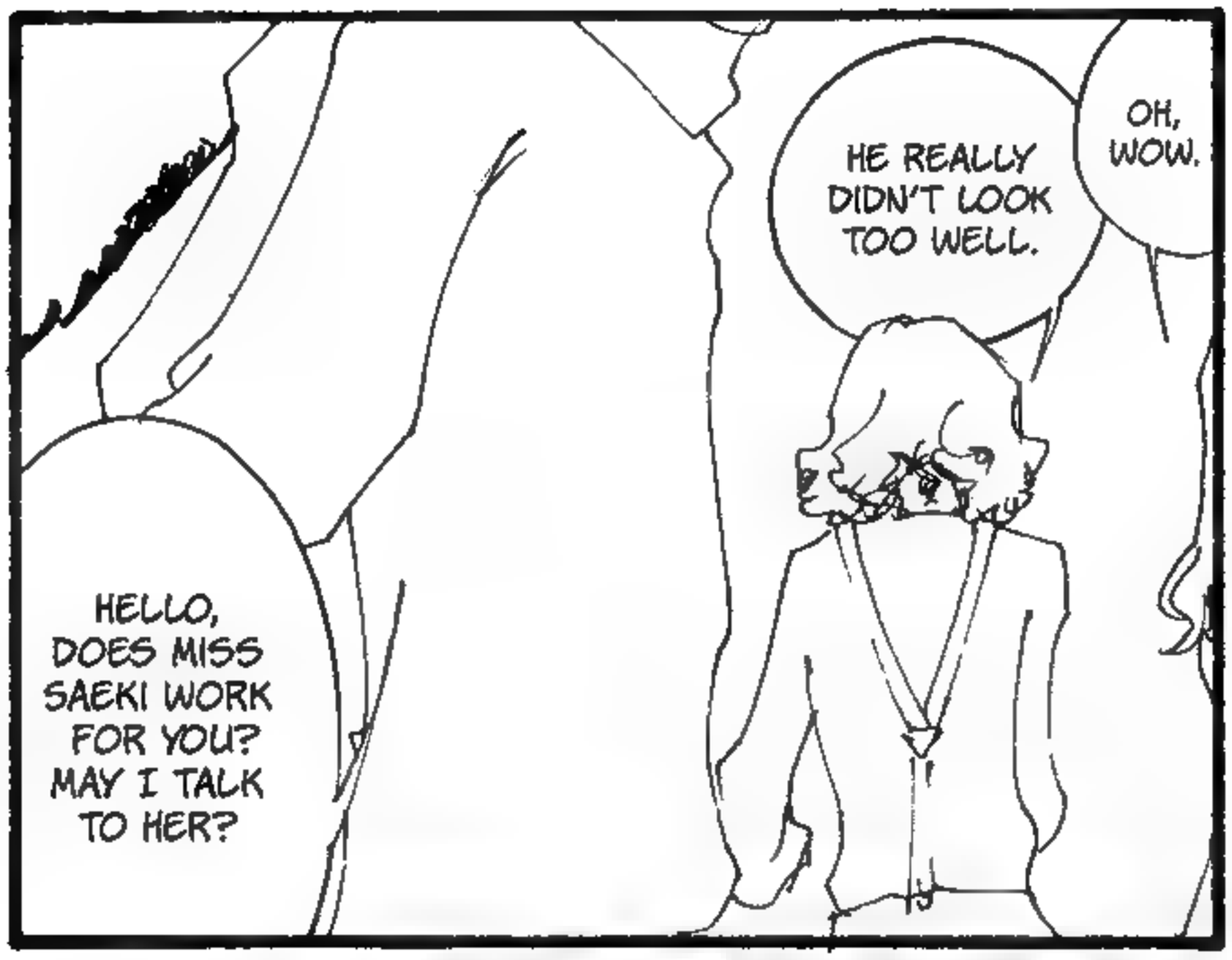
KOUJI !!!

KOUJI!?!

HEY, CAN SOMEBODY CALL THE AMBULANCE?

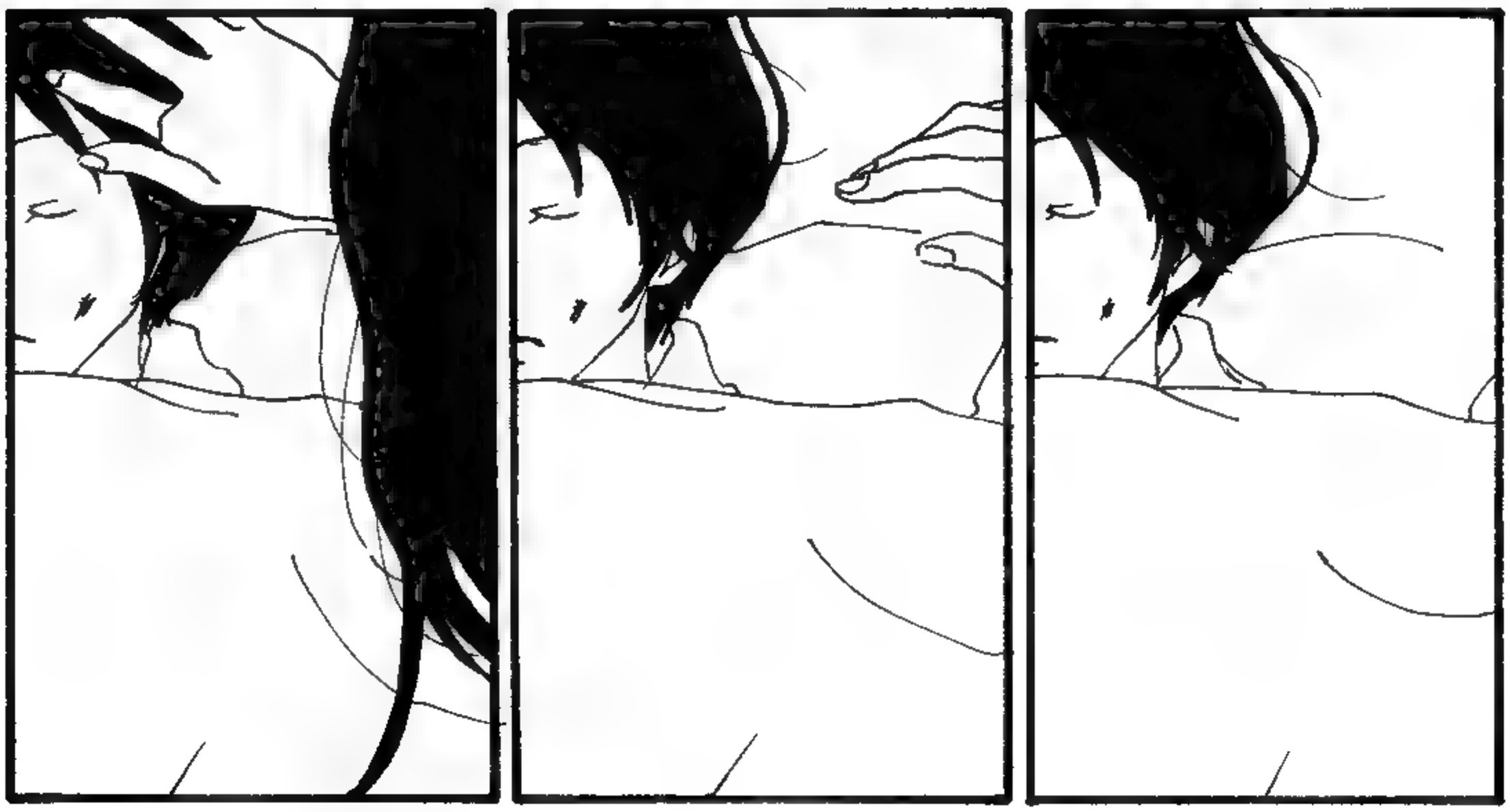
HELP!' ANYONE AROUND?

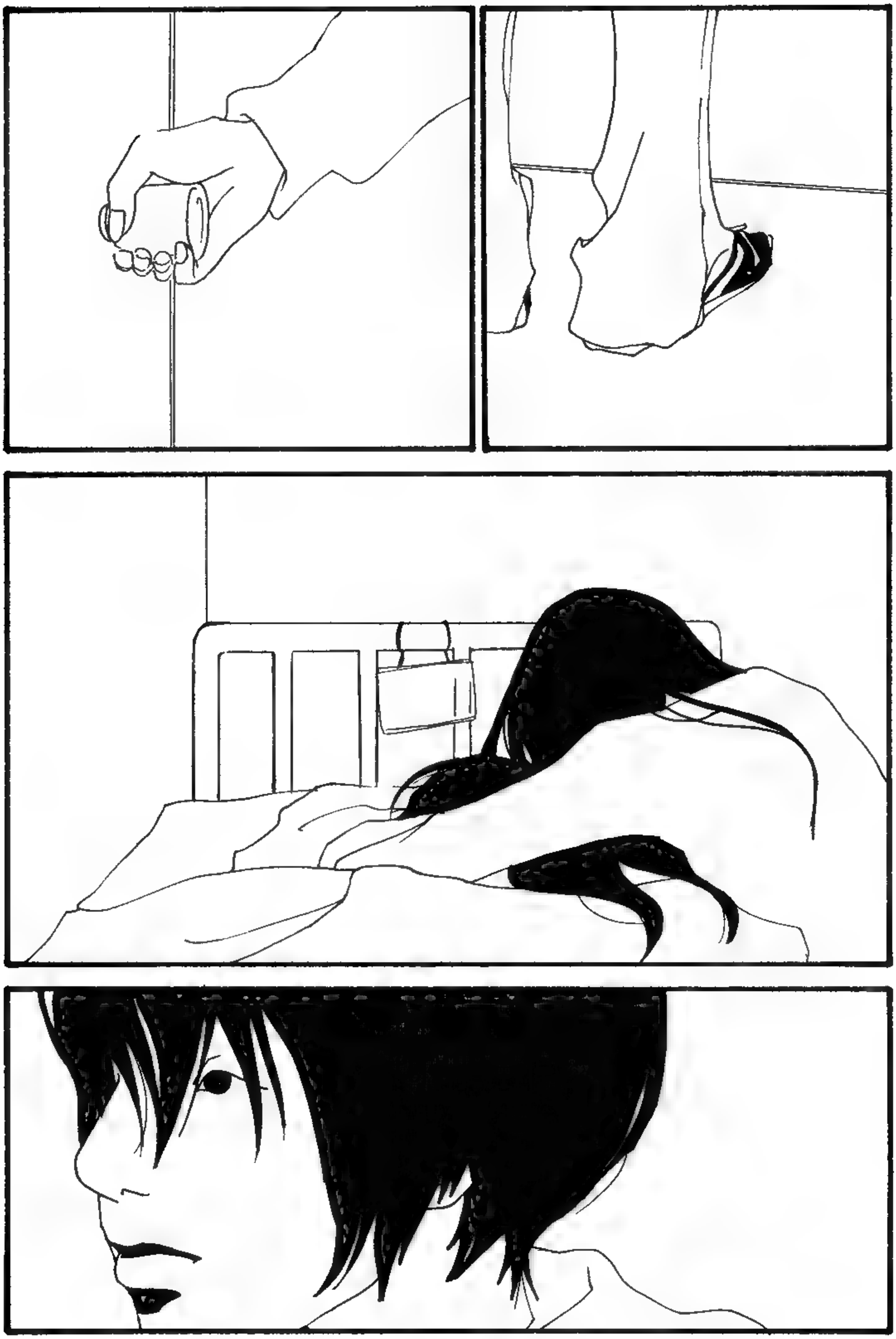
KOUJI IS UNCONSCIOUS!



After all it wasn't anything serious

He just had to stay at the hospital for two days to have some checks done.





RYO...

Suddenly I realized it; not like I had'rt somehow known it all the time; but...

"Basically; I had just been jealous of Kouji!"

Almost a Wedding Proposal

YESTER-DAY, I'D HAVE ALMOST THROWN UP.

...IT ACTUALLY REALLY TROUBLED ME. MY BODY SEEM-ED TO TELL THERE WAS SOMETHING MORE TO IT...

ME AND MY FAMILY WERE JUST SITTING AT TABLE, WHEN I GOT A HEARTBURN. MY PARENTS AND MY BROTHER WERE SHOCKED.

I TOLD THEM, I HAD THE FLEW AND IT'D BE ENOUGH TO HAVE A LIL' REST, BUT...

LIKE THAT?

YOU GOTTA TAKE OFF THE WRAPPER AND GET THE GAUZE WET.

YES.

HAND IT OVER.

NO, I'M GONNA DO IT MY-SELF.

AH, THAT'S FUNNY!

SO WHAT'S NEXT?

...I'D SAY... NO...

YOU DON'T GET RESULTS THAT FASTLY. MORE I DON'T KNOW MYSELF THOUGH.

TWO RED CIRCLES MEAN 'YES'. ANYTHING ELSE MEANS IT'S NO-THING.

WANT SOME TEA?

YEAH, THANKS.

TWO CIR-CLES, OR NOT?

SO?

HMM... WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

IF IT'S POSITIVE, WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO?

UH...

TOO BROKE TO RAISE A KID?

I...

...I'M BROKE, YOU KNOW THAT.

I HOPE YOU UNDER-STAND THAT THAT'D BE IMPOSSI-BLE!

DAMN, YOU'RE SO DUMB!!!

WE DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH OUR OWN LIFES; YOU THINK WE'D MANAGE BEING PARENTS!?!

WE'RE JUST MUCH TOO YOUNG!

DON'T WORRY, I'D BORROW SOME MONEY FOR THE ABOR-TION.

WOULD BE NICE IF YOU PAID HALF OF IT THOUGH.

NO RED CIRCLES AROUND.

WHAT-OH, IN A MINUTE.

WHAT 'BOUT THE TEA...?

AND 1400 YEN SPEND FOR NO-THING!

OH WELL. LET'S JUST FOR-GET 'BOUT THIS.

THAT'S ONE PRO-BLEM LESS.

I JUST WOULDN'T GET IT, AND I WAS SO WORRIED I HAD TO VOMIT.

IN THE END IT'S JUST A BELATED PERIOD.

HEY, YOU KNOW...

NEXT TIME, IF YOU'RE REALLY PREG-NANT, WE'LL KEEP IT.

...

...IT REALLY STRESSED YOU THAT MUCH?

IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN, WE'LL KEEP IT.

WHAT?! DON'T JOKE 'BOUT THAT! I DON'T WANNA!

WELL, IF YOU WANT US TO HAVE CHILD-REN...?

...YOU GOTTA STICK WITH ME FOR-EVER, 'K?

...

SEEMS LIKE I GOTTA TALK TO YOUR POPS FIRST. IS HE STRICT?

WHY? WHAT?

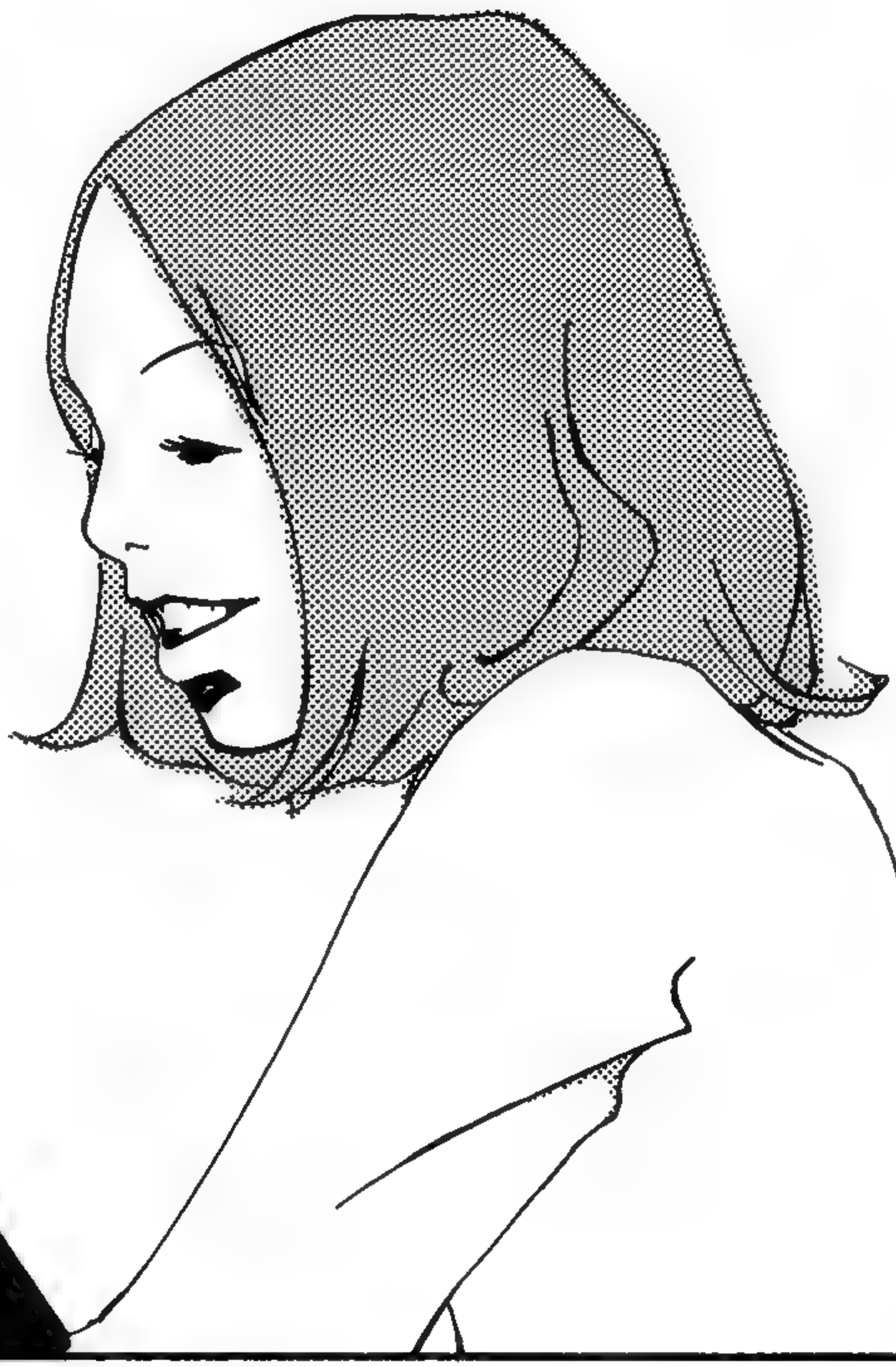
...

HE IS. A DAMN TYRANT.

AND MY BROTHER'S ALREADY STARTED TO TURN AFTER HIM, TOO.

GEEZ, IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME WITH YOU. HAVEN'T YOU HEARD WHAT I SAID JUST NOW?

The End of a Friendship



THE TIME'S BEEN UP LONG AGO.

THAT'S SO SHITTY.

TO BE HONEST, I WAS LATE MYSELF.

STILL, THIS IS GOING TOO FAR!

WA

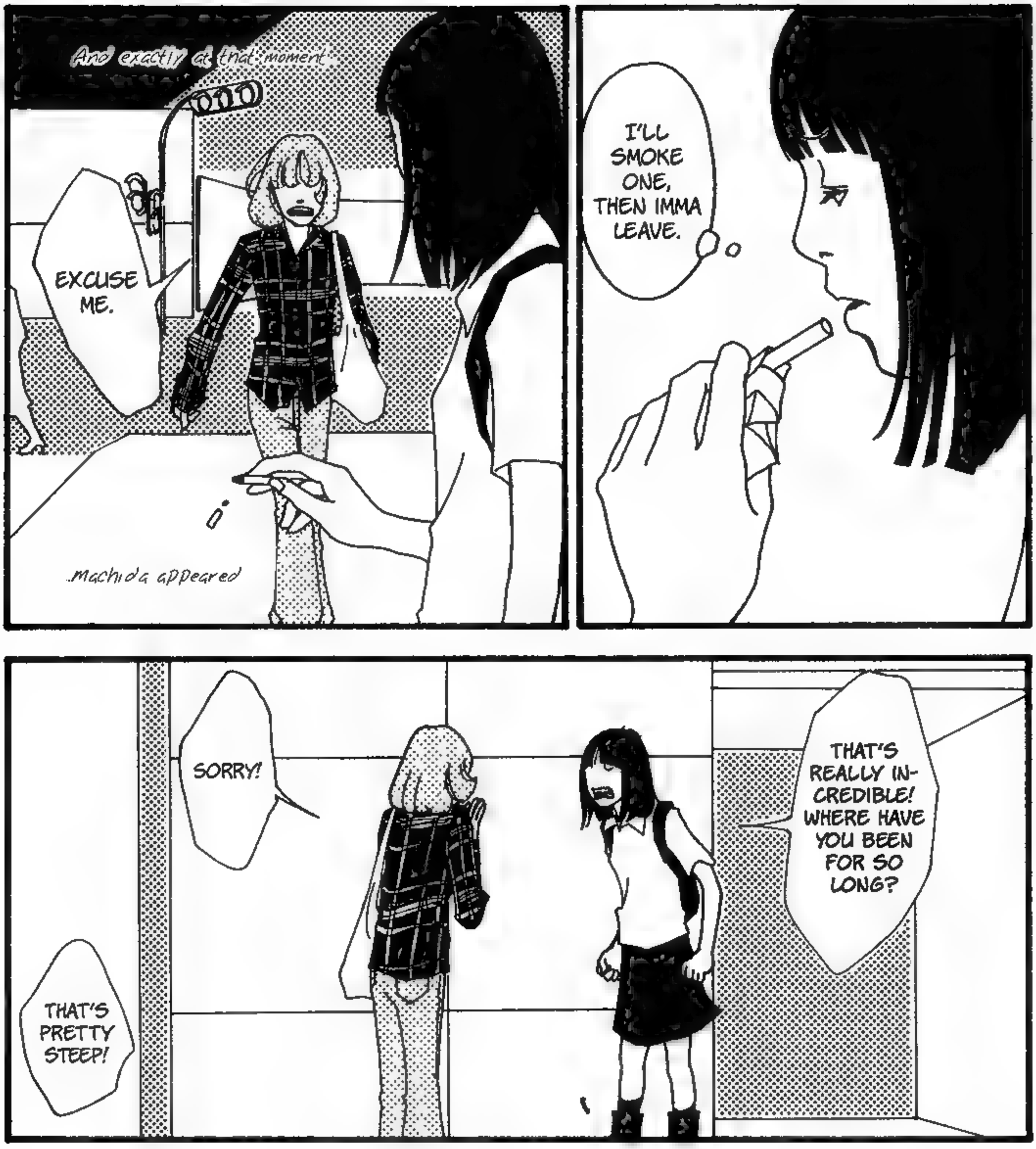
CITIZEN

OGAWA

OLYMPU

ALL THIS WAITING IS SO DAMN ANNOYING.

IT'S ENOUGH; IMMA LEAVE.


And exactly at that moment...
EXCUSE ME.
...Machida appeared
I'LL SMOKE ONE, THEN IMMA LEAVE.
SORRY!
THAT'S PRETTY STEEP!
THAT'S REALLY IN-CREDIBLE! WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN FOR SO LONG?

Does she think I'm her bimbo? I really hate that.

I had been 10 minutes too late, but she made me wait for 30 minutes. Machida was 40 minutes too late and didn't have anything better to say than "sorry!".

THAT'S ODD, DON'T YOU THINK SO..? BACK IN THE DAYS WE MET EVERYDAY.

YEAH, ODD.

SINCE THE EXAMS. WE HAVEN'T SEEN EACH OTHER FOR FOUR MONTH!

APRIL, MAY, JUNE, JULY - FOUR MONTH.

TELL ME, HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN?

YEAH. YOU LIKE IT?

THAT'S HARD. YOU KNOW THAT I WORK AT A ITALIAN RESTAURANT?

NOT A BIT. I GOTTA WORK FAR TOO MUCH FOR THAT SHITTY PAY.

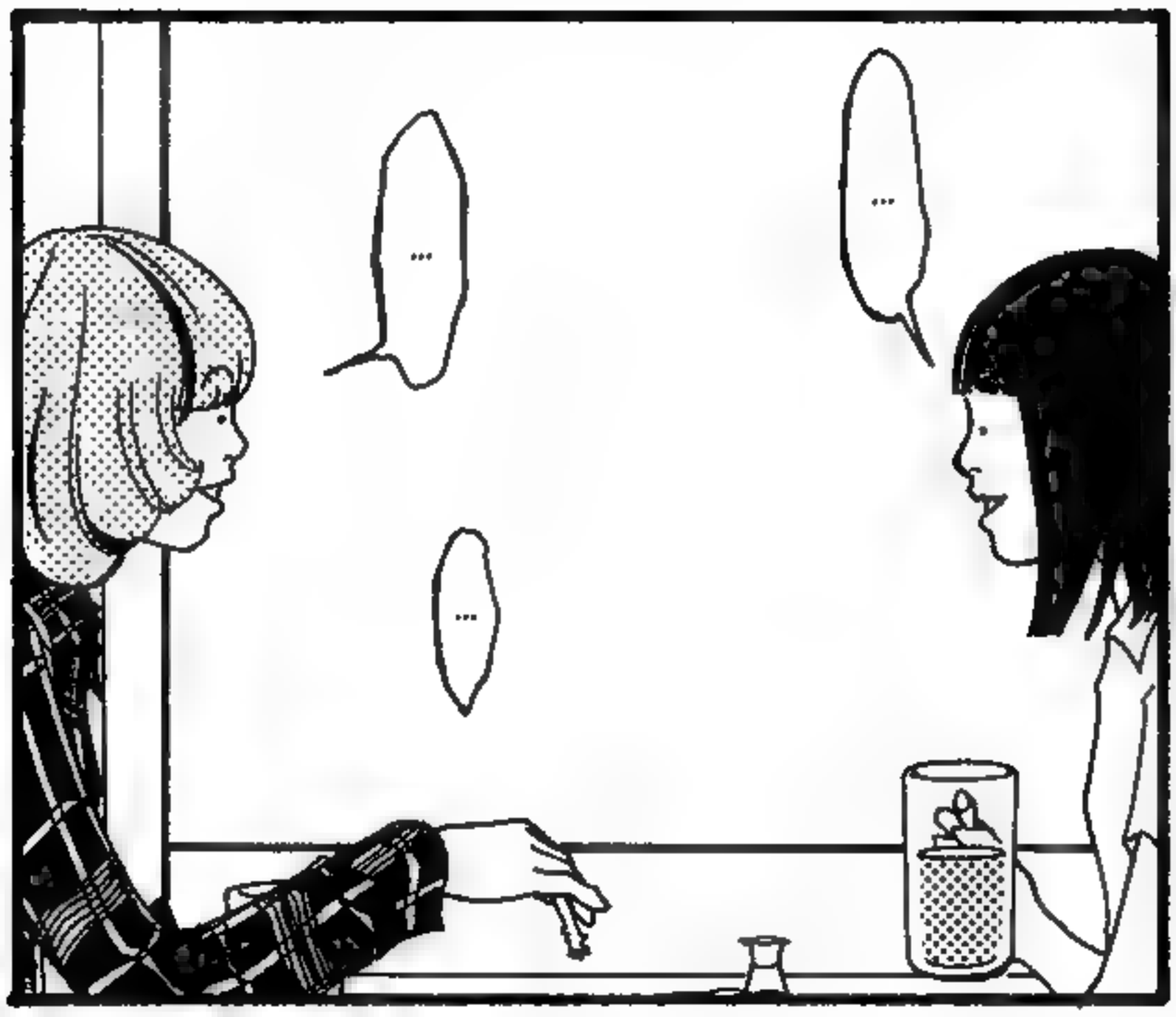
ME? OH SO-SO. I GOT A NEW JOB.

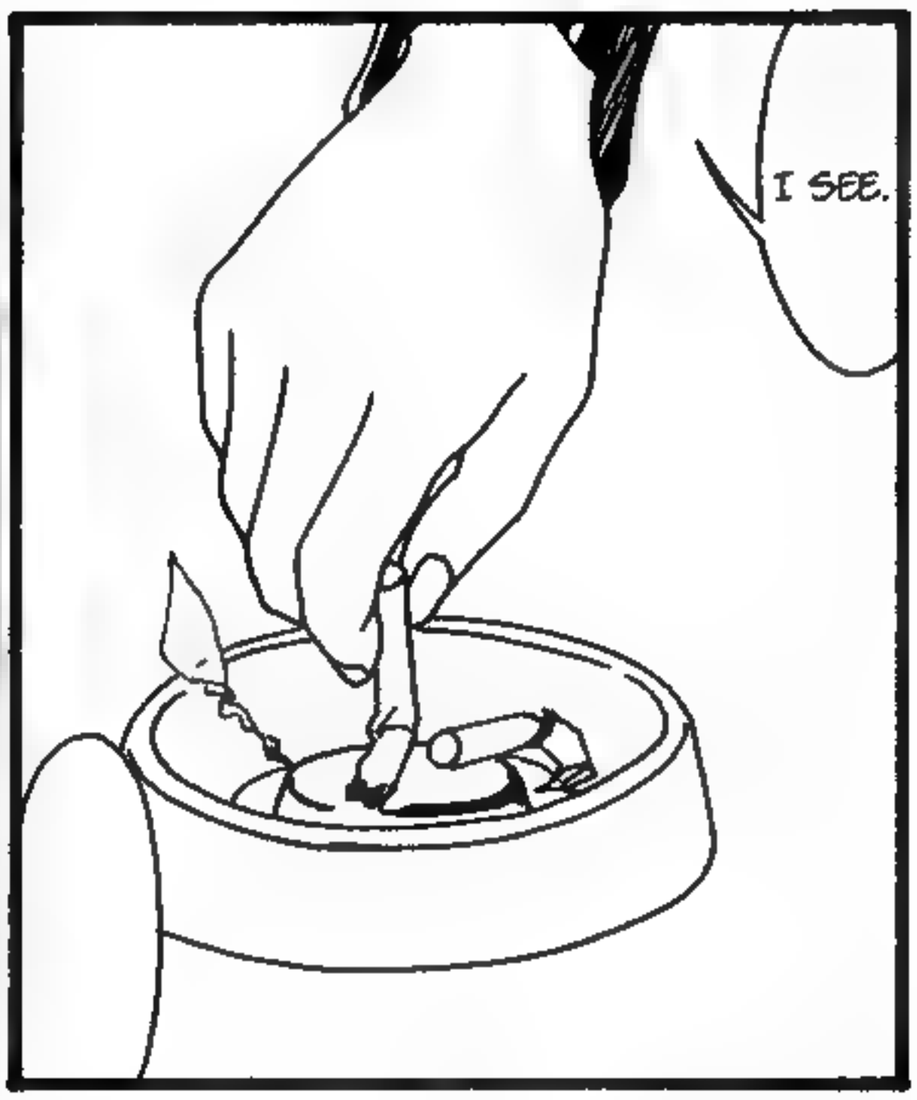
SO, HOW ARE YOU?

WHAT, ALREADY? IN AN APPAREL STORE?

YES.

BUT THE SHOP IS EMPTY MOSTLY. SOMETIMES I CHITCHAT ALL DAY WITH THE OTHERS. THE ONLY DOWNSIDE IS THAT ONE NEEDS TO STAND ALL THE TIME.





We didn't have anything to tell each other anymore. What should I have told her.

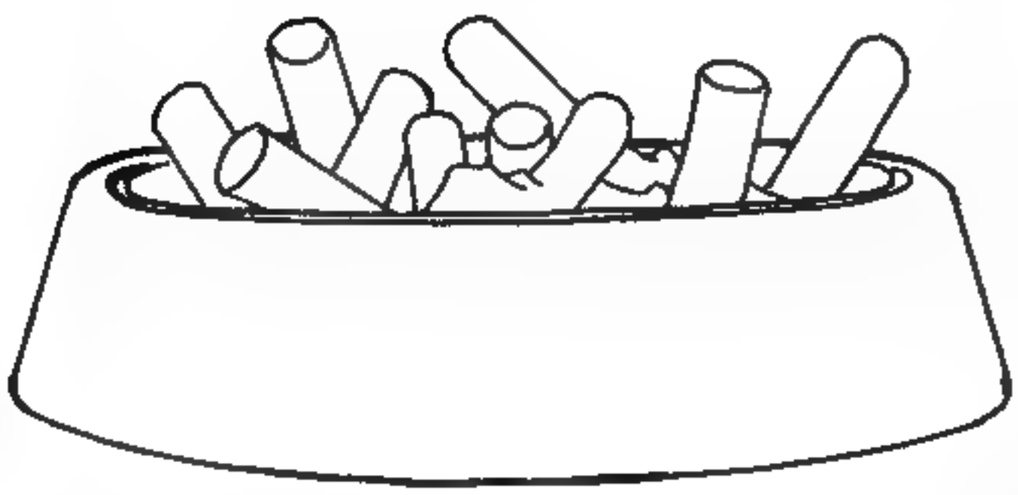
I had hoped, that Machida would get tipsy fastly and that it would get a funny evening

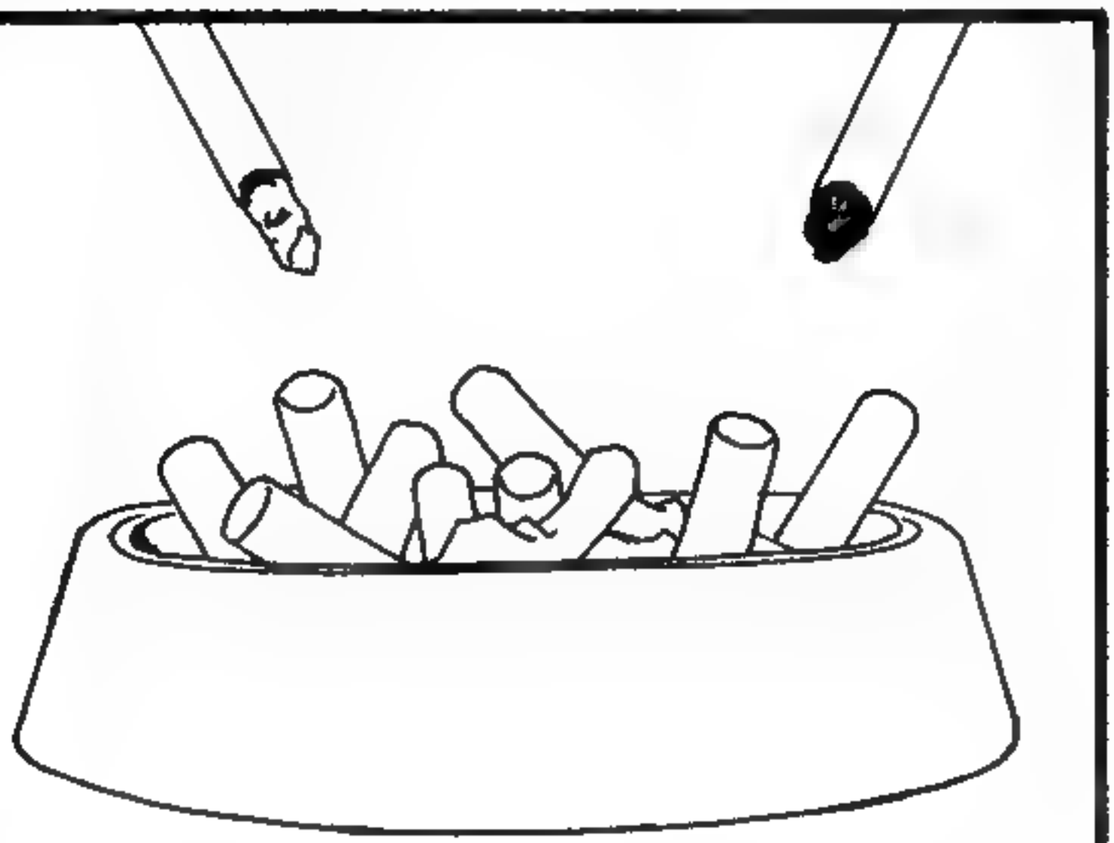
It's a bit childish to rely on alcohol Anyway, I watched out to keep my mind sober. It was dumb, that we were checking out each other like that.

SORRY, PUT OUT YOURS FIRST.

THANKS.

OH BY THE WAY...





I'M STANDING NEXT TO NATCHO AT THE CHECKOUT ALL DAY. SHE KNOWS WHAT SHE WANTS, SHE'S STRONG.

STRONG? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

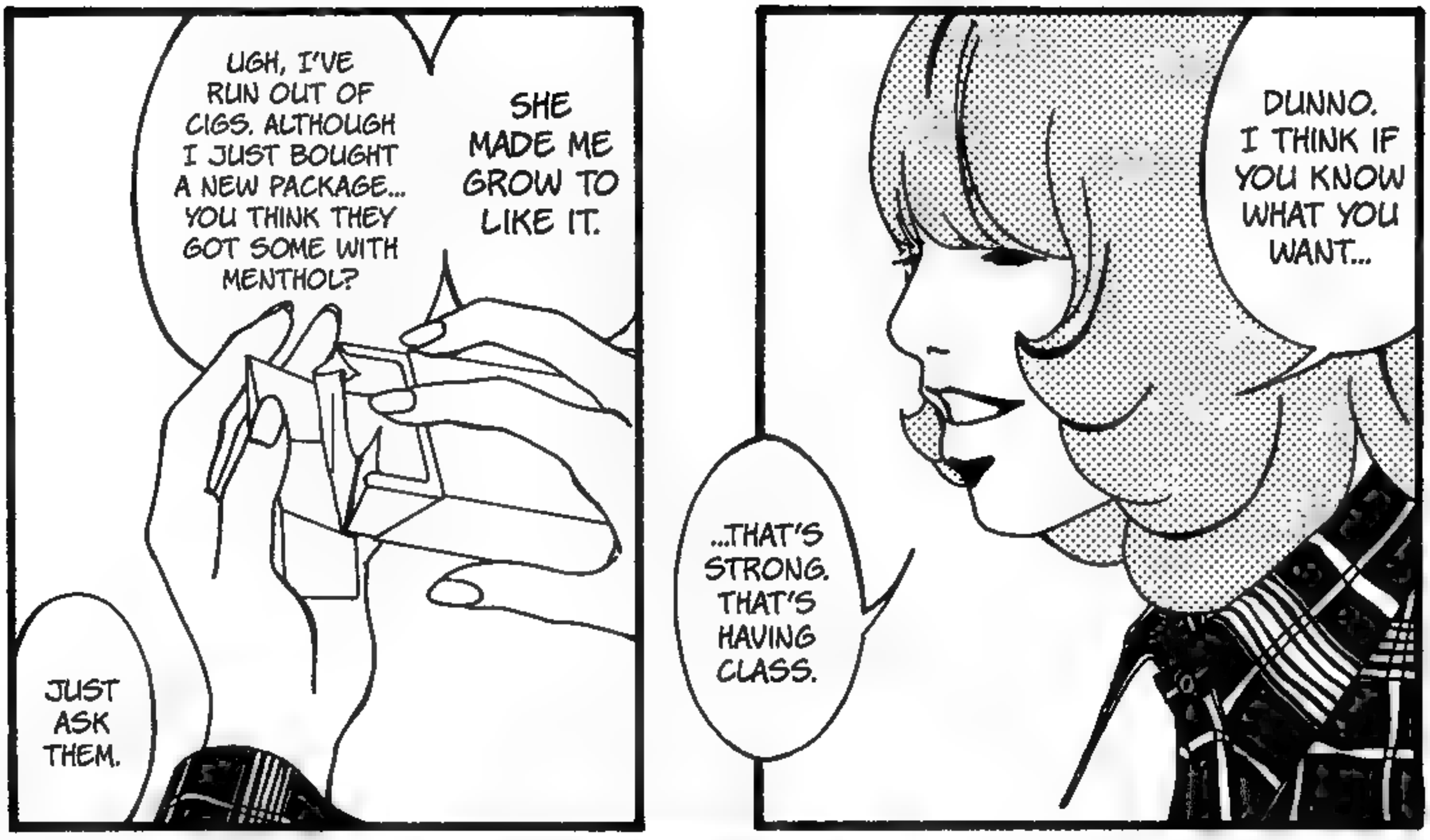
JUST COME ALONG.

YEAH, WHY NOT.

YOU LIKE THAT KIND OF MUSIC NOW?

I GOT A CO-WORKER, HER NAME IS NATCHO.

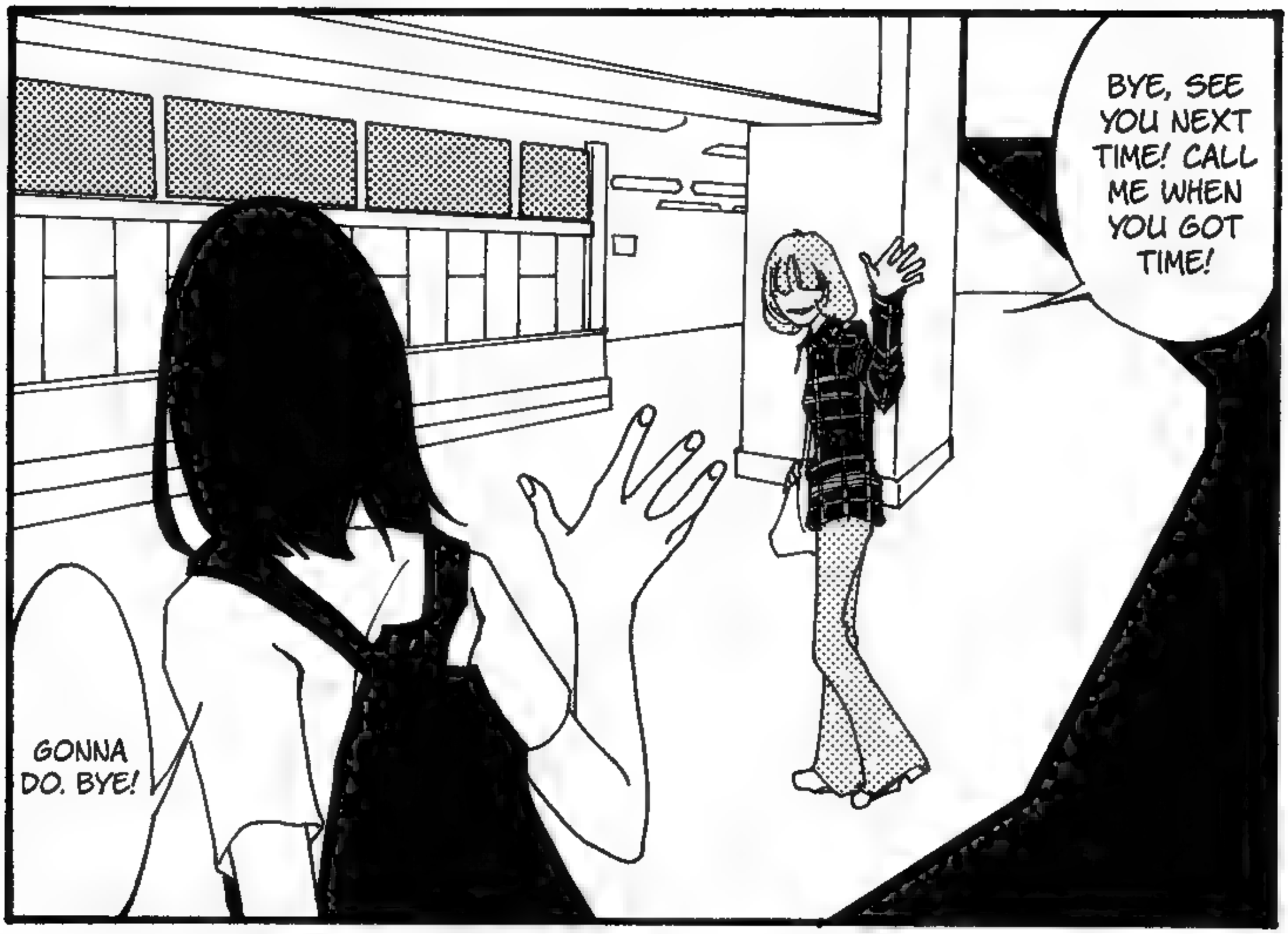
SHE ORGANIZES A 70'S PARTY, YOU'RE INTERESTED?


UGH, I'VE RUN OUT OF CIGS. ALTHOUGH I JUST BOUGHT A NEW PACKAGE... YOU THINK THEY GOT SOME WITH MENTHOL?
SHE MADE ME GROW TO LIKE IT.
JUST ASK THEM.
DUNNO. I THINK IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT...
...THAT'S STRONG. THAT'S HAVING CLASS.

Someone smoking that much, has a certain thing he doesn't wanna talk about. Our talk is totally trivial. We act so laid back and funny...

. but the cigs in the ashtray tell their own story.

Machida, you're beating around the bush You don't like the 70's, but you got a new friend, right?



We were very fond of each other... in the past.

My Life
First Example: Chikada

I'd wish to have some
interresting stories to tell.
Like those you can see on tv.
But the stuff happening there
doesn't happen in reality,
and that's why I don't have
anything interresting to tell
In my life there's nothing happening,
or it's so damn mundane.

Anyway, I'm still waiting,
hoping something would happen

WOW, THAT PHO-NING REALLY EARNS US SOME MONEY.

FFFFT FFFFT FFFFT

WE GOT WHAT YOU'D CALL A STABLE RELATION-SHIP.

I've been living together with a woman working at a record store for two years Great, right? Suddenly she began practicing phone sex, and now she's earns incredibly much money I got a job, but that's more like earning pin money Like a pimp

OH!

A comfortable, usual life.

HI!

AH!

HI!

CHIKADA! YOU'VE BEEN MISSING FOR QUITE THE TIME.

AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN TELL ANYBODY. THE BOSS IS GONNA BE DEAD ANGRY.

OH. REALLY?

YOU GOT SOMETHING ELSE TO TELL ME?

THE MONTH'S JUST STARTED, AND YOU'VE ALREADY SKIPPED FOUR DAYS.

UH...

WELL ...

CHIKADA, IF YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT THE JOB, I GOT NO PROBLEM WITH FIRING YOU.

IF YOU'RE MISSING ANOTHER TIME WITHOUT HAVING AN ATTEST, YOU'LL BE FIRED. KEEP THAT IN MIND.

DAMN, THOSE FEW TIMES ...

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? THIS IS MY LAST WARNING!

ACTUALLY SHE'S QUITE SEXY.

NO; IT'S SOMETHING ELSE.

HERE... GOTTA PEE?

UGH... CHIKA-DA...

CHIKADA!

FLUSHH

...I'M FINE WITH SLEEPING WITH YOU, IF YOU DON'T SKIP WORK ANY-MORE!!!

WHAT ?!?

I'M SURE SHE IS! AND I THINK...

YOU SHOULD REALLY PULL YOUR-SELF UP! PLEASE ...

OH? SEEMS LIKE SHE'S SERIOUS.

THE BOSS TOLD ME ABOUT YOU...

I...

CAN'T PROMISE YOU THAT ...

THIS JOB'S SHITTY. I DON'T CARE IF SHE FIRES ME.

THAT ONE, TOO?

CHIKA-DA...

UH...

HEY, THE PRODUCTS AREN'T PRI-CED YET!

EVERY-THING COSTS 2,900 YEN!

UH ...

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

WELL, MAYBE IT'S NOT REALLY ALWAYS THE SAME ONE, BUT...

I KNOW, THAT YOU GOT A GIRL-FRIEND. BUT ALWAYS THE SAME GETS BORING, RIGHT?

...

THAT'S WHY I THOUGHT, I SHOULD, AS A RETURN SERVICE...

...MAYBE IT'S EGO-ISTICAL TO ASK YOU TO NOT GO MISSING AGAIN...

THAT REALLY WAS EMBAR-RASING. SORRY...

WHAT AM I TAL-KING?!

HA HA HA

IT'S AC-TUALLY REALLY FUNNY TO TELL THOSE IDIOTS A BUNCH OF NONSENSE.

YOU'RE GONNA WORK? HAVE FUN.

HI, IT'S ME!

HE HE HE

GREAT!

THEN IMMA GO IMMEDIA-TELY.

HI.

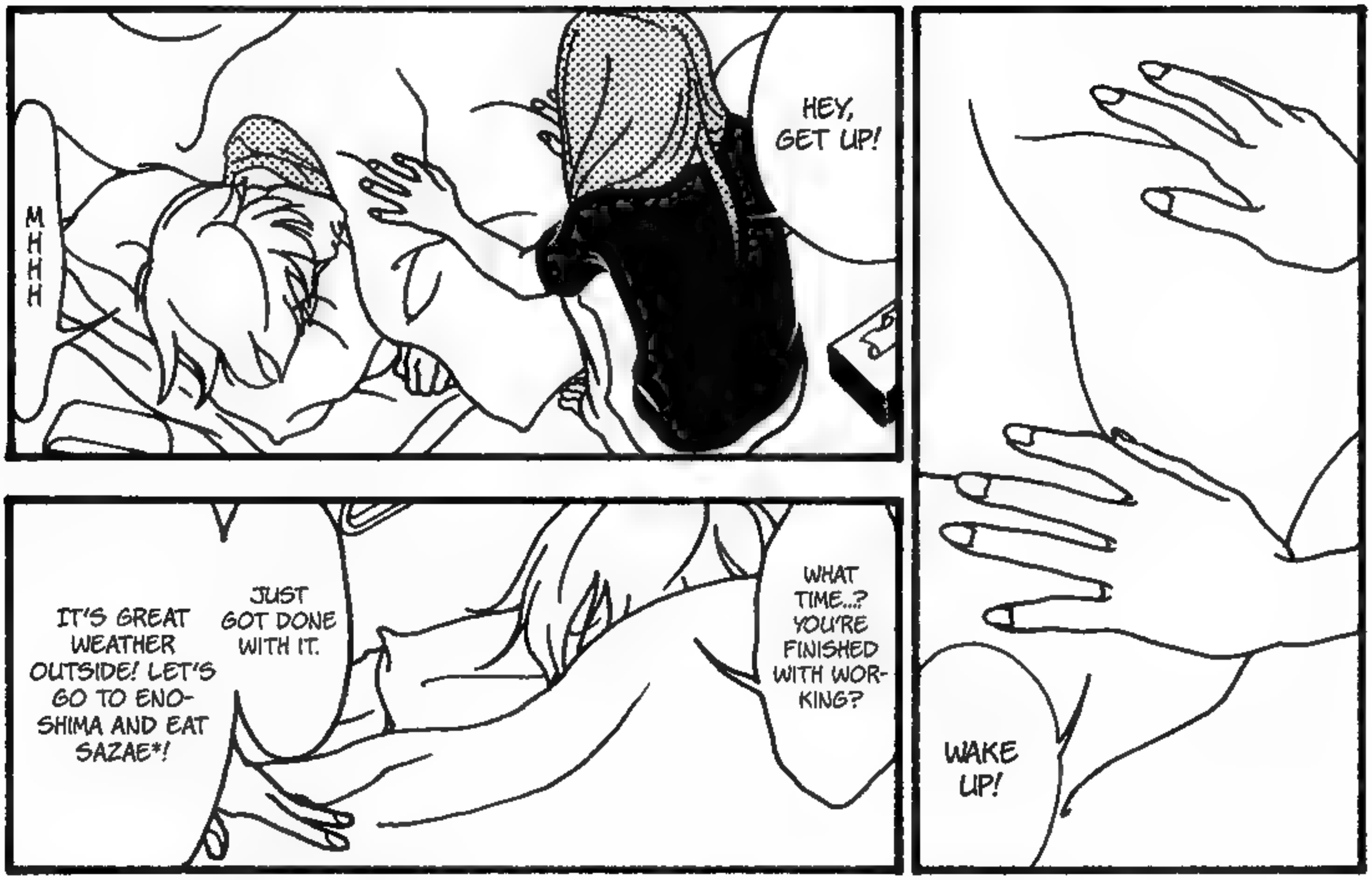
I'VE PUT BATH SALTS INTO YOUR BATH-WATER.

If I give up the job

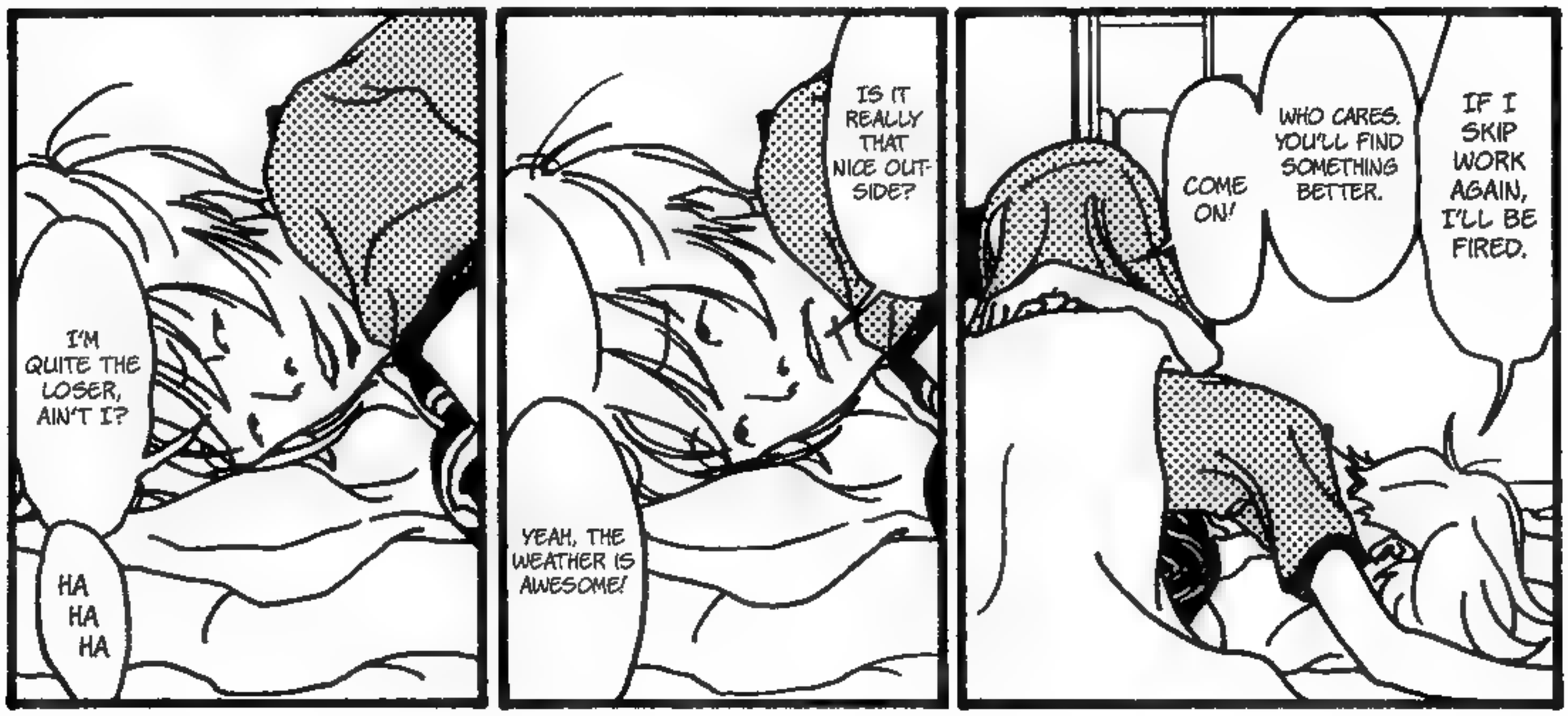
I'll never meet her again.

SHE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT, BUT SHE'S GOT NICE BOOBS.

...


HEY, GET UP!
HHH
WAKE UP!
WHAT TIME...? YOU'RE FINISHED WITH WORKING?
JUST GOT DONE WITH IT.
IT'S GREAT WEATHER OUTSIDE! LET'S GO TO ENOSHIMA AND EAT SAZAE*!

*BARBEQUED TURBOT WITH MUSSELS.

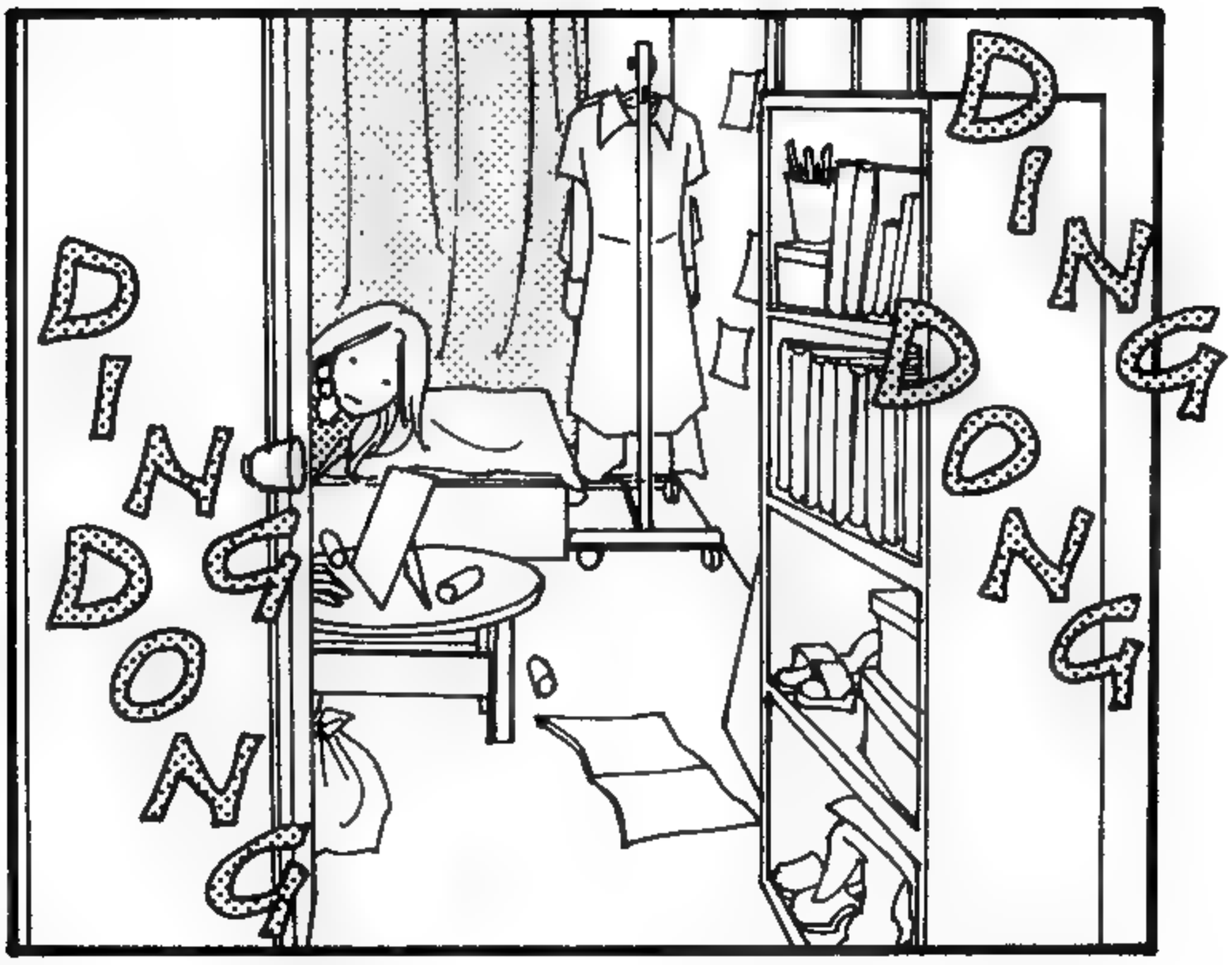

I'M QUITE THE LOSER, AIN'T I?
HA HA HA
YEAH, THE WEATHER IS AWESOME!
IS IT REALLY THAT NICE OUTSIDE?
COME ON!
WHO CARES. YOU'LL FIND SOMETHING BETTER.
IF I SKIP WORK AGAIN, I'LL BE FIRED.

An uncomplicated, normal life.
Uncomplicated and normal.

After all there's no point
in complicating stuff.

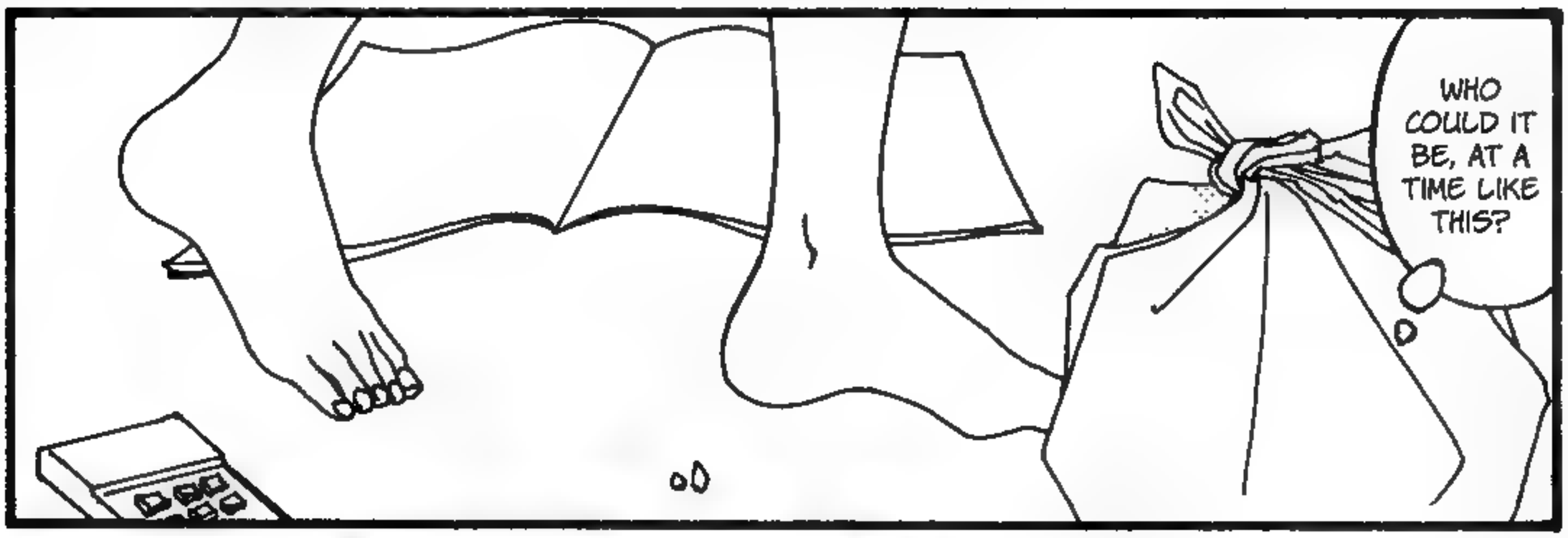
The mussels tasted great,
we drank a beer along with it
We enjoyed it big time.

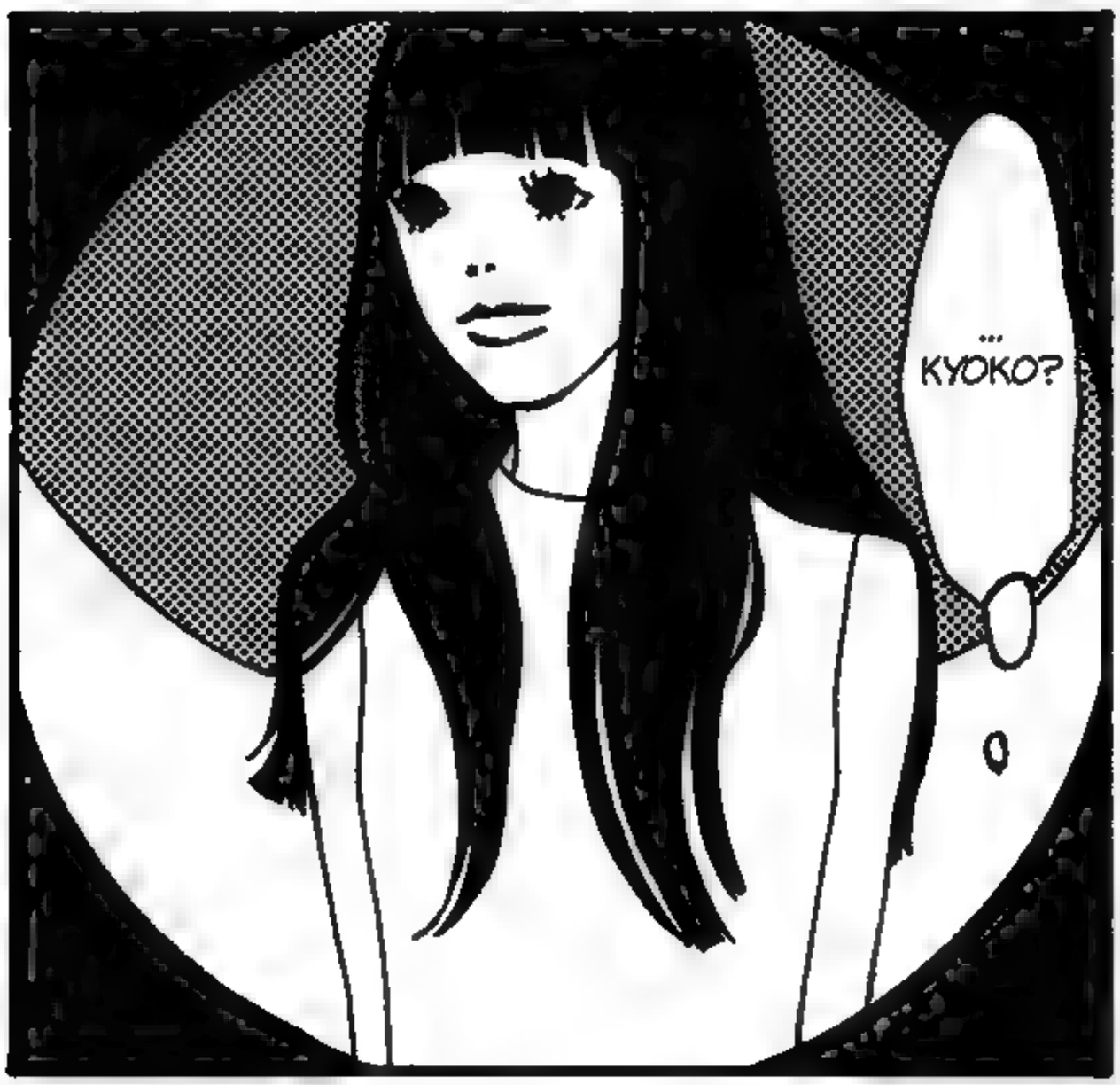
Kyoko

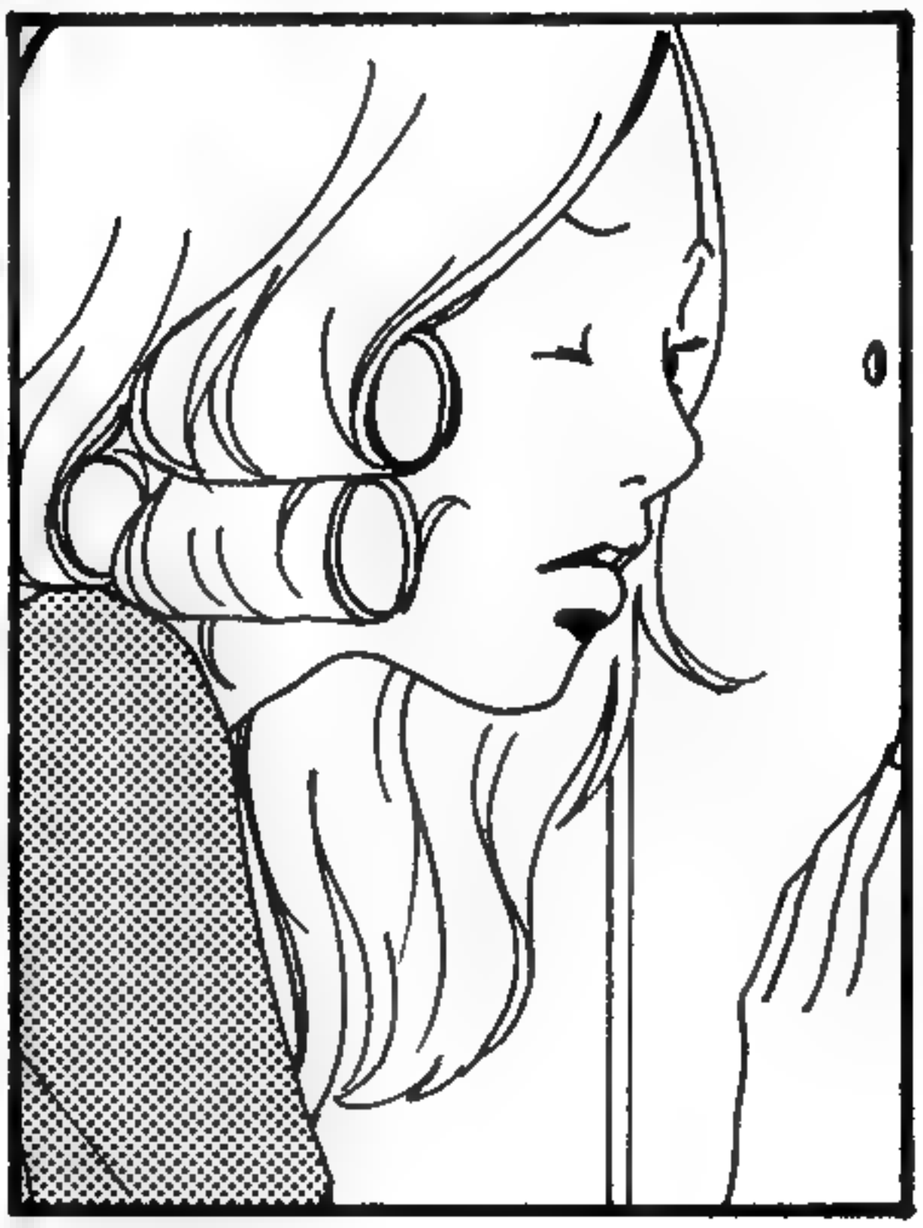


Actually, I'm a loser.

Take this case for example...







OF COURSE, BUT IT'S REALLY CHAOTIC ...

KYOKO? WHAT'S UP?

IT'S OK.

JUN! I HOPE I'M NOT DISTUR-BING YOU?

CAN I GO INSIDE?

THANKS.

SO, WHAT'S UP? WHY ARE YOU SMILING LIKE THAT? YOU'RE MAKING ME NERVOUS.

COME ON, TELL ME!

HI HI HI

WHAT A SHAME...

IF YOU HAD CALLED BEFORE, I'D BOUGHT SOME WINE.

...WELL...

I'M GONNA GET MARRIED.

TANAKA. VERY SOON.

WHO IS IT? TELL ME! AND WHEN?

TANAKA? THE ONE YOU'RE GOING OUT WITH RIGHT NOW?

UNBELIEVABLE! OH MY GOD!

Mmm...

Married

WHAT?

YOU'RE JOKING!

NO! THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

LOST? HOW SO?

YOU'VE OUTDONE ME. JUST AS ALWAYS. YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN BETTER THAN ME.

NONSENSE.

AH...

WORDS FAIL ME.

AND I'VE LOST YET AGAIN.

THE THREE OF YOU ALWAYS STICKED TOGETHER.

BUT NO ONE EVER MET THOSE TWO ALONE.

DON'T YOU REMEMBER, AT SCHOOL WITH KATO AND NISHIOKA...

THEY NEVER SAID ANYTHING, BUT THEY WERE ALWAYS FIGHTING OVER YOU.

IT'S TRUE! IT HAS LIKE THAT FROM THE START, SINCE WE GOT TO KNOW EACH OTHER. IT HAS EVEN BEEN LIKE THAT IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.

YOU GOT A PRETTY FACE AND YOU'RE TRIM.

STOP IT, JUN!

WELL, IT STOPPED QUITE SOON.

SO, NOW YOU KNOW IT.

OH, REALLY? I DIDN'T KNOW THAT.

TO BE HONEST, I REALLY LIKED NISHIOKA ...

REALLY..? I HAD NO CLUE!

ACTUALLY, THAT HAPPENED QUITE OFTEN.

AND SO MUCH MORE.

WHENEVER WE WENT TO A BAR AND A COOL DUDE APPROACHED ME, HE JUST ASKED WHETHER THAT WAS MY FRIEND.

GUESS WHO WAS MEANT. OBVIOUSLY YOU.

I REALLY DON'T KNOW HOW I MANAGED TO BEAR WITH IT.

AND NOW YOU'RE GONNA GET MARRIED...

That's what I told her; but...

...to be honest, I wasn't really convinced myself.

I actually felt like I was the real winner.

That was the first time since I had come to know Kyoko.

To have so many love affairs, and then to stick with just one. And then...

To have kids and abandon everything someday, not being allowed to enjoy anything.

Horrible. Not only for a women, no, for any human being; it's coming to a dead end.

Nah, that's definitely not my dream.

IF I GIVE UP MANY THINGS NOW, CAN'T YOU DO SOMETHING GREAT FOR THE TWO OF US?

YOU'RE SO TALENTED; SO MUCH MORE THAN ME.

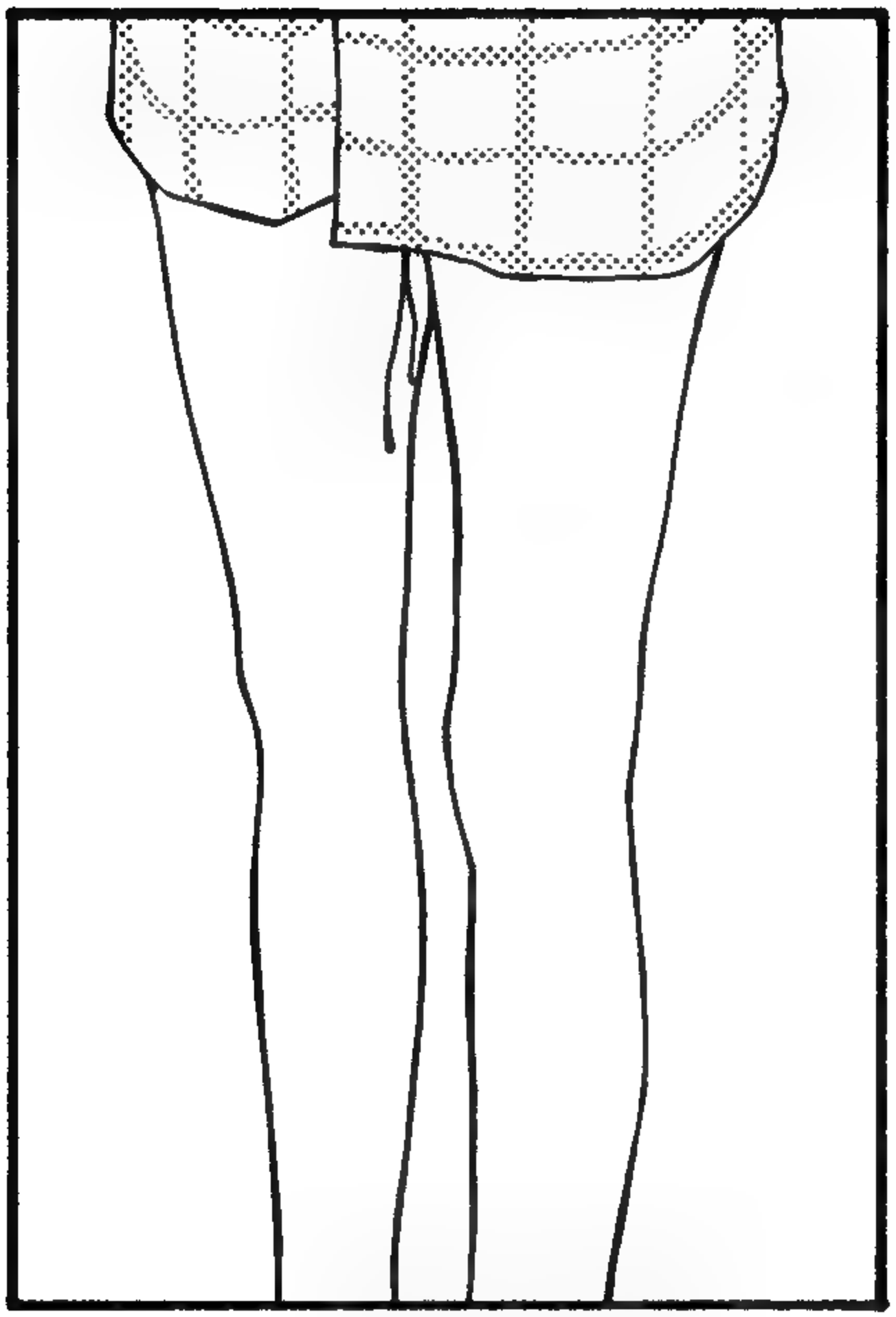
LISTEN, JUN...

WHAT?

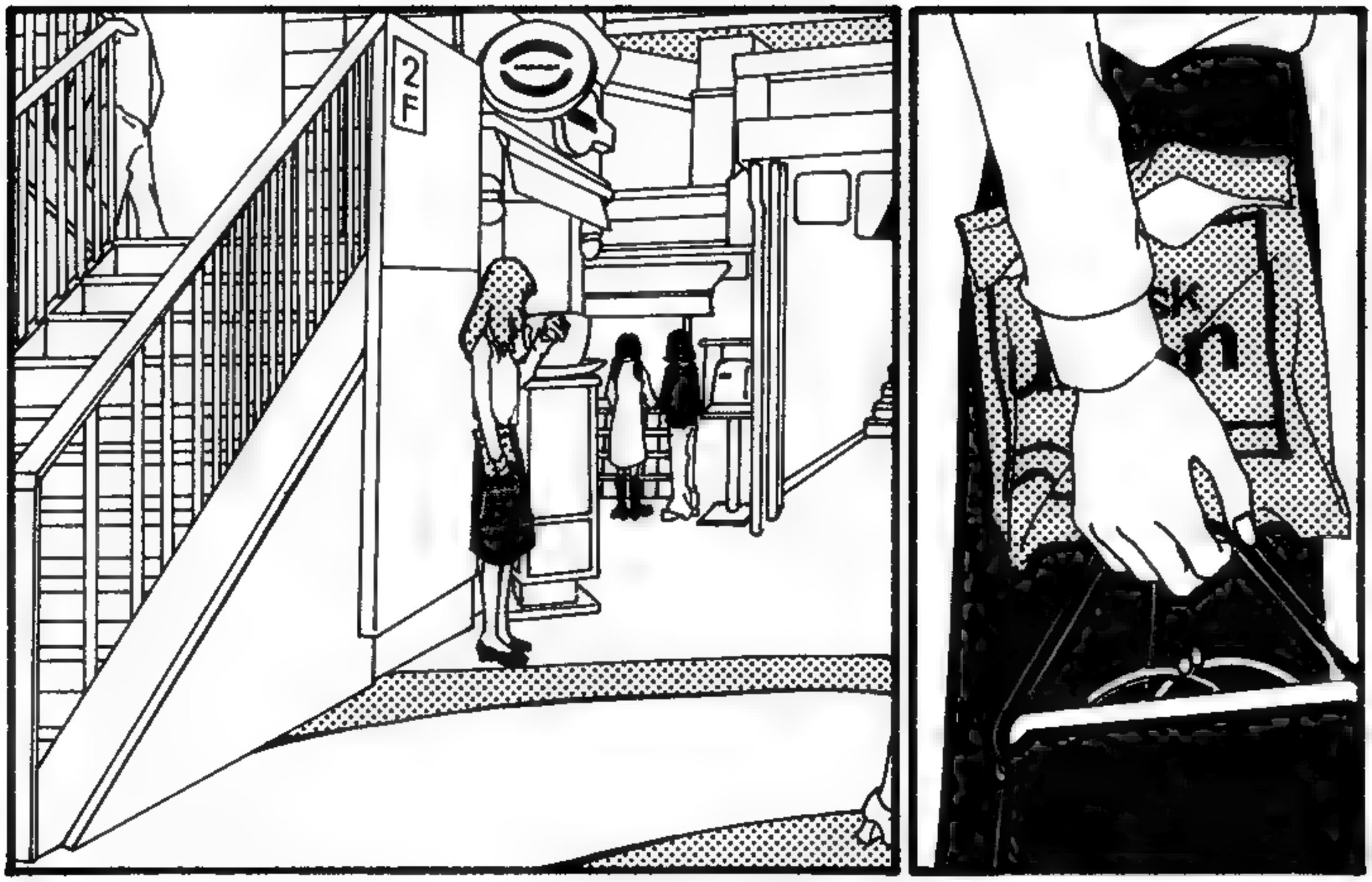
YEAH, SURE.

YOU'RE REALLY INCREDIBLE...

I WISH YOU HAPPINESS, KYOKO.



That Afternoon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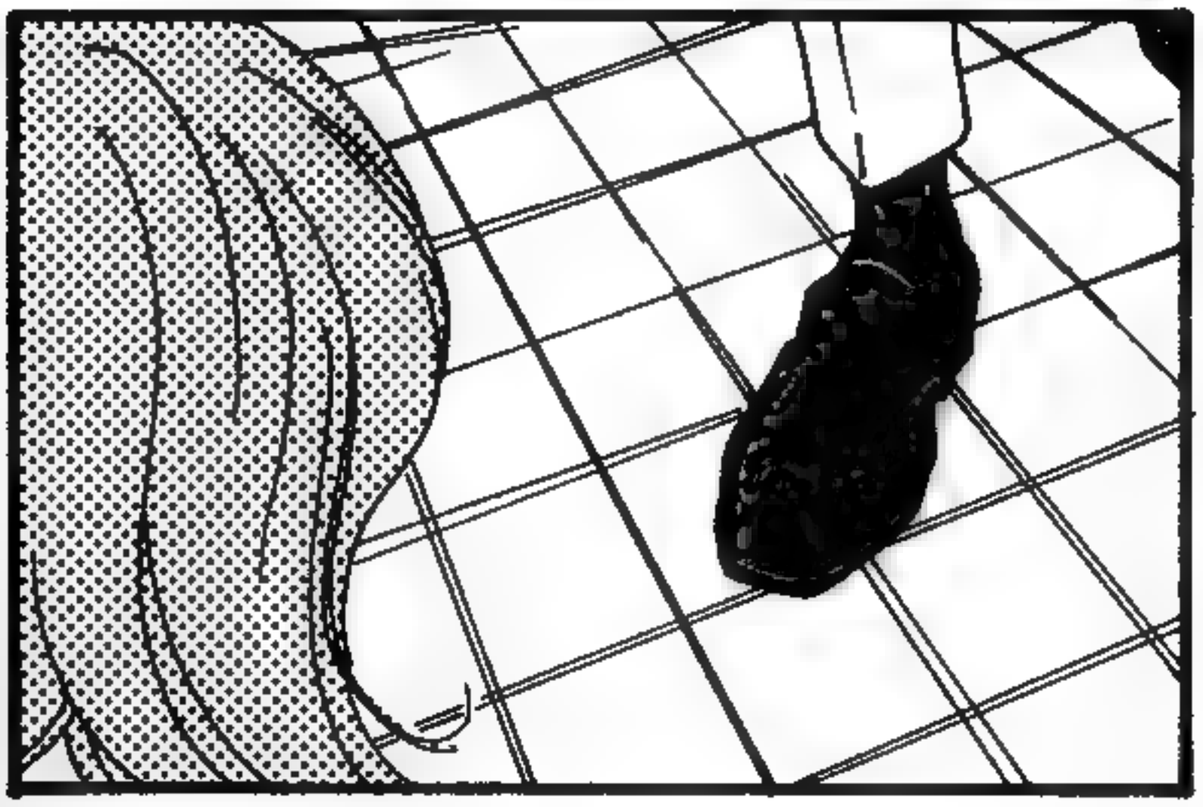
F

SORRY,
I'M
LATE...



If you think so... Well, okay...

LET'S GRAB SOME-THING TO DRINK BEFORE, K?

IT'S OKAY.

HERE, YOUR BOOK.

JUST GIVE IT TO ME LATER.

UGH ...

TWO AND A HALF YEARS I THINK.

LONG TIME NO SEE, RIGHT?

Damn, why not.

YOU REALLY THINK SO? IMPOSSI-BLE...

YOU'VE LOST SOME WEIGHT, HAVEN'T YOU? LOOKS GOOD ON YOU.

I'M A GROWN UP WOMAN.

...BULLY!

YOU'RE SUCH A...

YOU'VE GROWN SOME WRINKLES, HAVEN'T YOU?

That was him, yeah, him...

TO BE HONEST, YOUR CALL REALLY SURPRISED ME. AT FIRST, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW WHO I WAS TALK-ING TO.

Oh, how well did I know that face.

YOU WANT ONE, RIGHT?

YEAH.

TWO CUPS OF COFFEE YOU.

...I JUST THOUGHT YOU'D MAYBE MOVED; AND I'D JUST HEAR "THERE'S NO SUCH NUMBER." BUT THEN YOU REALLY ANSWERED.

I WAS JUST A BIT SURPRISED.

HAHA, YOU SAID: "KINOSHITA SPEAK-ING."

WHAT?

YOU REAL LY TALKED STRANGELY, YOU KNOW?

AH, RIGHT

WELL ...

I MEAN, ON THE PHONE.

OH, FOR REAL? HOW DO MANAGE TO YOU PAY YOUR BILLS THEN?

LOST MY WORK LAST YEAR.

ACTUAL-LY, I JUST DON'T GOT THE MONEY TO MOVE.

...

YOU'RE LIVING WITH HER?

I GOT MY GIRLFRIEND PAYING EVERYTHING FOR ME.

OKAY, UNDER-STOOD ...

GIGOLO? MORE LIKE A... PIMP.

YOU'RE JUST LIKE A GIGOLO! DAMN, YOU REALLY GOT CLASS!

WOW? THAT YOUNG?! AND SHE'S THE BREAD-WINNER?

HEY, HOW OLD IS SHE?

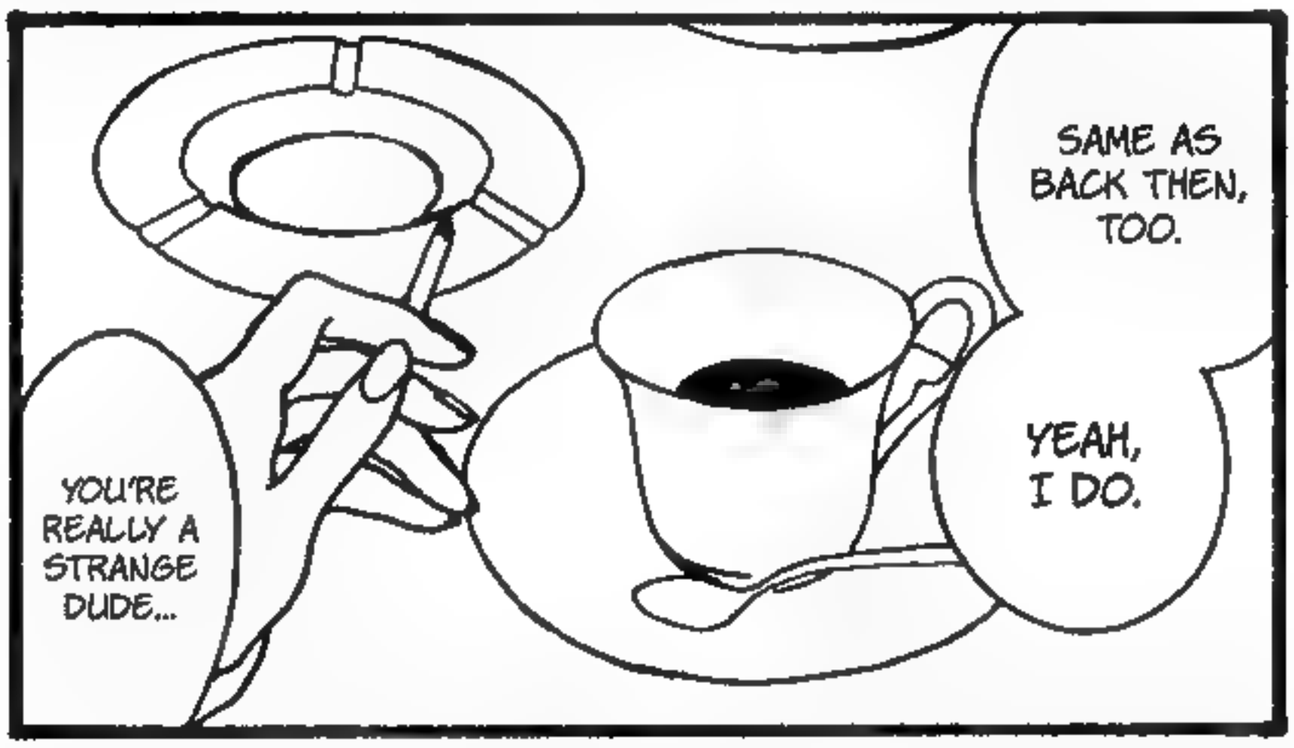
21... ALMOST 21...

YOU KNOW I DON'T PLAN ON MARRY-ING.

WHAT A QUESTION?! OBVIOUSLY NOT!

YOU'RE GONNA MARRY?

You're a handsome guy
You're so handsome,
I almost



fear looking at you
I'm staring at the
window right behind
you all the time

And all that,
although we haven't
even yet had sex

IT'S STILL KINDA EARLY FOR GOING TO A PUB.

HEAD HOME?

WHAT'RE WE GONNA DO NOW?

YEAH.

LET'S GO HOME.

THIS SOMEHOW FEELS LIKE SECRETLY FEEDING YOUR NEIGHBOR'S CAT.

DIDN'T I CALL YOU, AND YOU'RE BROKE ANYWAY, RIGHT?

AH, IT'S OKAY.

YOU'RE GONNA TREAT ME? NICE, THANKS!

HEY, THAT'S FOR THE COFFEE.

HUH?

NAH, NOT "BYE". WHAT ABOUT THE BOOK?

IMMA TAKE THE BUS.

OKAY.

BYE THEN.

THE BOOK I WAS GONNA RETURN TO YOU.

OH, RIGHT.

SORRY; I REALLY KEPT IT FOR TOO LONG.

'BOUT THE KID... WHAT ABOUT THE TWO OF US BEING IT'S PARENTS?

OK, NOW WE CAN SAY GOOD-BYE.

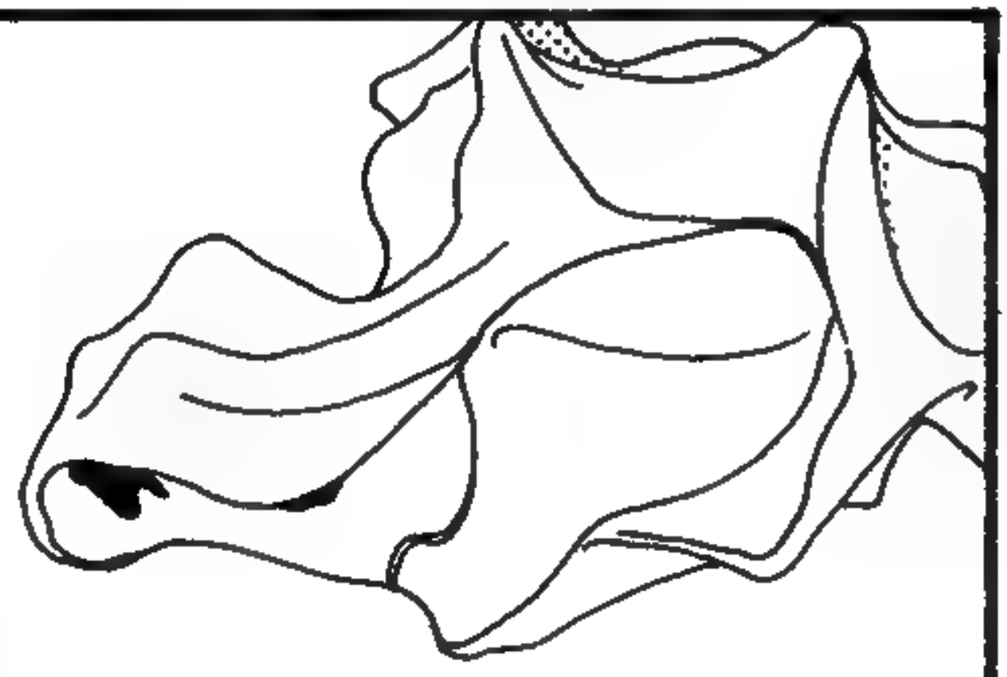
HEY, TELL ME...

YOU'RE SO RES-PONSIBLE!
HI HI HI!
ALWAYS!
YOU THINK I'D RAISE A KID WITH A WOMAN SMOKING NONSTOP?!
...HA HA!
CIAO.
SEE YOU.. SOME-DAY...
OKAY, GOOD-BYE!

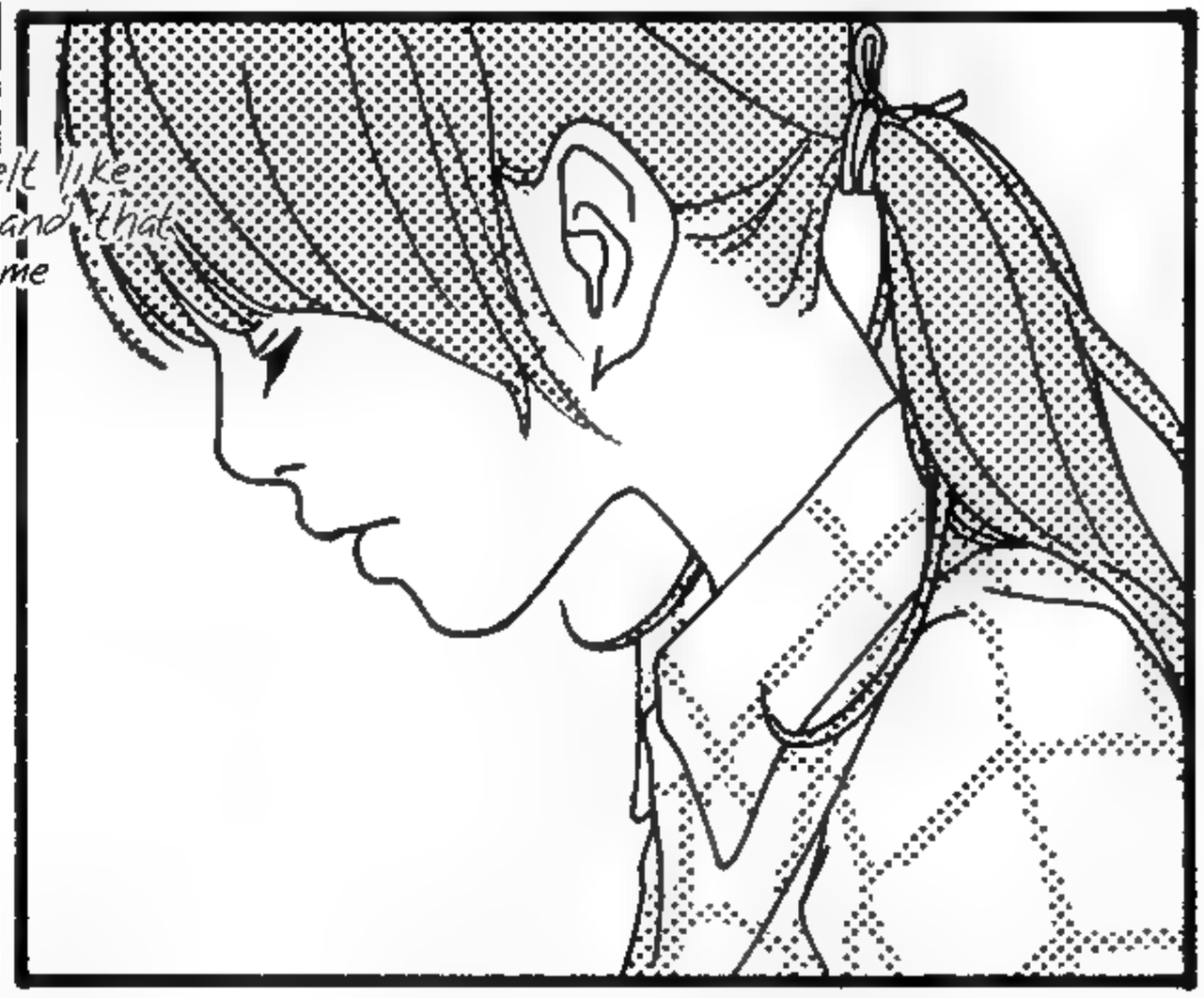
Long, kind of ruffled,
at a slant spiky hair.
A shirt with a white collar
underneath a dark sweater.
Light pants. Black, flat shoes.
The face a bit paler than I had
remembered, but just as large as
I had thought, and very slim.
Bony hands, just like back then.
Whenever you look at him, he immediately
answers by staring at you.
His voice, it's tone, his expression,
nothing has changed.
And finally...

Finally...

Just meeting him again just
wasn't enough to get me pregnant
But when I saw my panties drenched
in blood, I thought. "So you're dead"
I was very sad

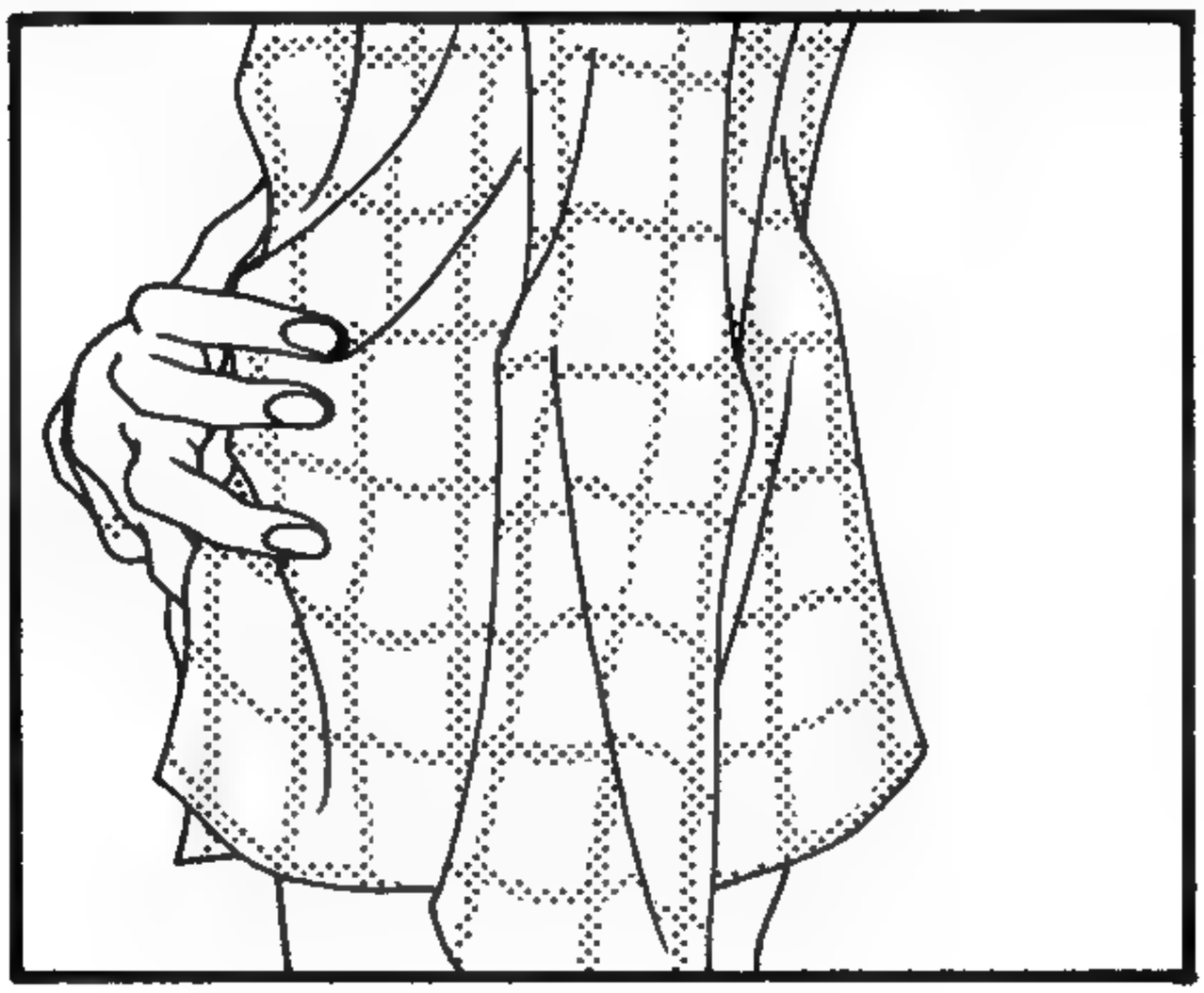


After that afternoon I felt like
you had been inside me, and that
you're very important to me



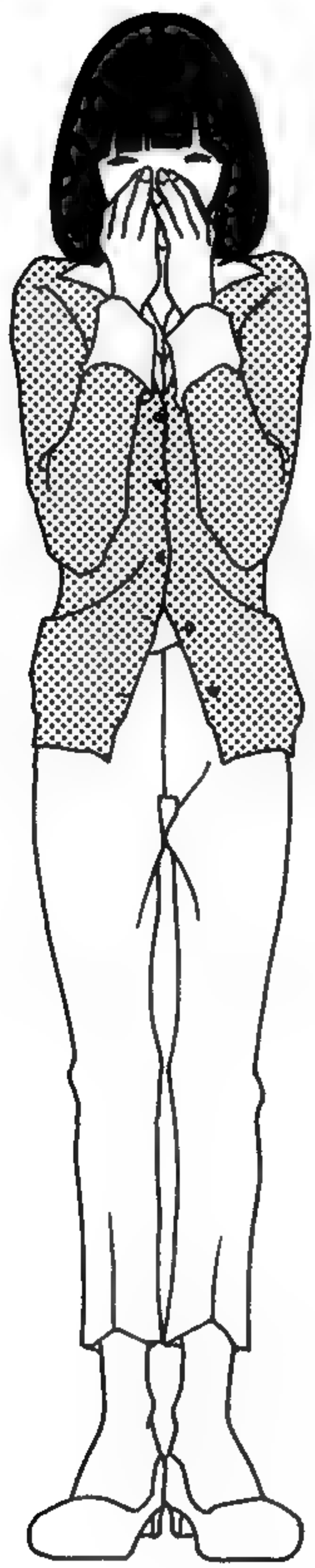
I got nothing left reminding
me of his, not even you
Nothing Not a thing
And still

Every now and then I
dream of that afternoon



My Life

Second Example: Sawa



Passion, sympathy, winning people's hearts, growing, letting loose, love

Wonderful words to talk about!

It'd be so great, if they were true.

Now and forever A life with words like that, oh, that'd be great

With him, I think we'd manage it

THERE'S NO WORD OF CRYING, OF SHITTING, FARTING WHILE ASLEEP AND STUFF. YOU SEE?
ANYWAY, LISTEN UP, SAWA! THAT'S GREAT! AWESOME! CONGRATS!
BUT... THAT STILL SOUNDS A BIT FISHY ...
UH...
HM...
YEAH, I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU WANNA TELL ME.
YOU'D UNDERSTAND THOSE FRUSTRATED HOUSEWIFES, SNACKING CANDY AND PICKING THEIR NOSES ALL DAY.
They really exist?
I TELL YOU, THAT'D CHANGE EVERYTHING. YOU'D SEE REALITY MORE CLEARLY.
FEELS LIKE ALL THAT'S JUST YOUR IMAGINATION RUNNING WILD.
CAN'T YOU AT LEAST MOVE IN TOGETHER WITH SOMEBODY?
I GOT SO MUCH TO TELL... ENOUGTH THAT IT WOULDN'T EVEN FIT INTO THE WHOLE FEEL YOUNG*.

*A magazine, that Kiriko Nananan publishes in.

That's before...

I think it'd be so easy with Chikada.

We were so happy.

2

I'D BETTER ACT DUMB NOW.

IT'S NOW OR NEVER!

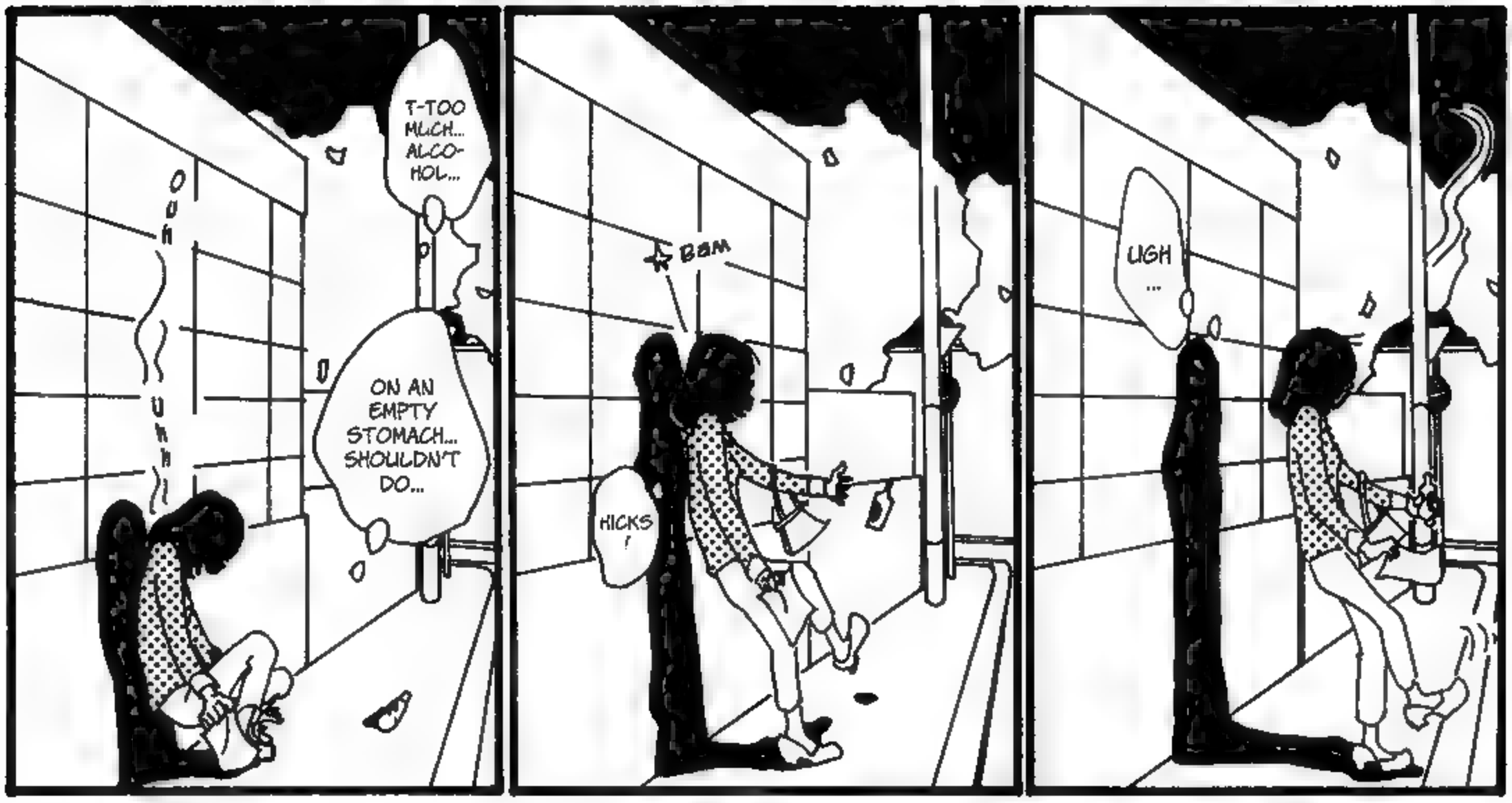
COME ON!

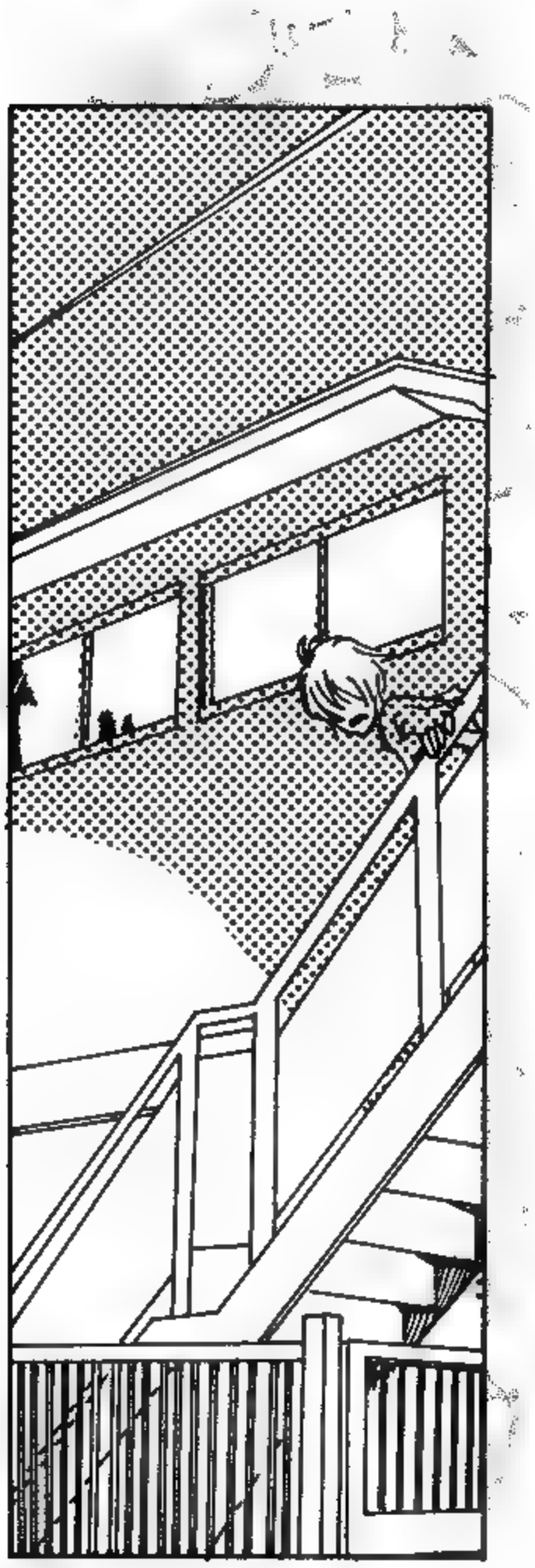
履歴書

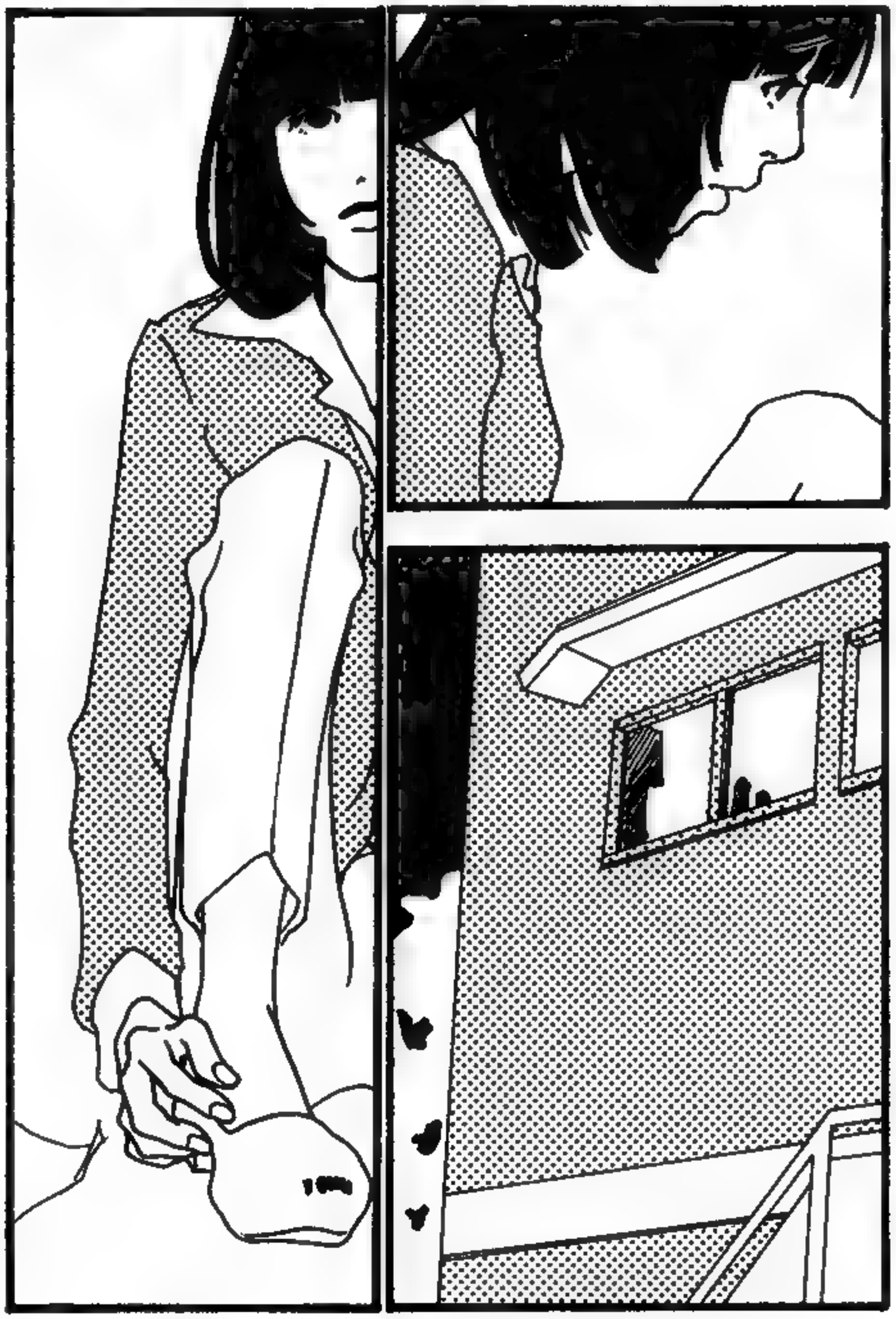
Curriculum Vitae
Surname: Chikada
Given Name: Atsushi
Address: Setagaya-ku
Data

...I visited his apartment one night, a night as dark as the depths of the sea. I took along a sheet of paper, as white as a bed sheet...

There


T-TOO MUCH... ALCO-HOL...
ON AN EMPTY STOMACH... SHOULDN'T DO...
BAM
HICKS
UGH ...





...oh?!?

YOU'RE ALL RIGHT?

'SUP?

WHAT'S UP WITH HER?

A HEART ATTACK, HUH?

...WUT?

YA TALKING 'BOUT LAST NEW YEAR'S...?

HAHAHA! DUNNO WHAT TO SAY, NAGASHIMA ...

AA!
AAAH!
HA!
AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!
YOU THINK YOU'LL BE OKAY?
HM...
ARE YOU HURT?
I JUST WANTED... CHIKADA... MEET HIM AGAIN...
I JUST CAME AROUND SPONTANE-OUSLY...
EX-CUSE ME, BUT I...
UGH... HI, HELLO...
I REALLY GOT TO...
WHA... WHAT'S THAT...?
YOU KNOW HER?
COULD...
AWH...
COULD...
YOU BE HIS GIRL-FRIEND?

...

CHIKA-DA...

...

I WANT CHIKADA! JUST FOR ME AND ME ALONE!

THIS... TH-THIS CAN'T BE TRUE...!

THAT'S ALL...

...ASKED ME TO RETURN YOUR APPLICATION PAPERS TO YOU, CHIKADA...

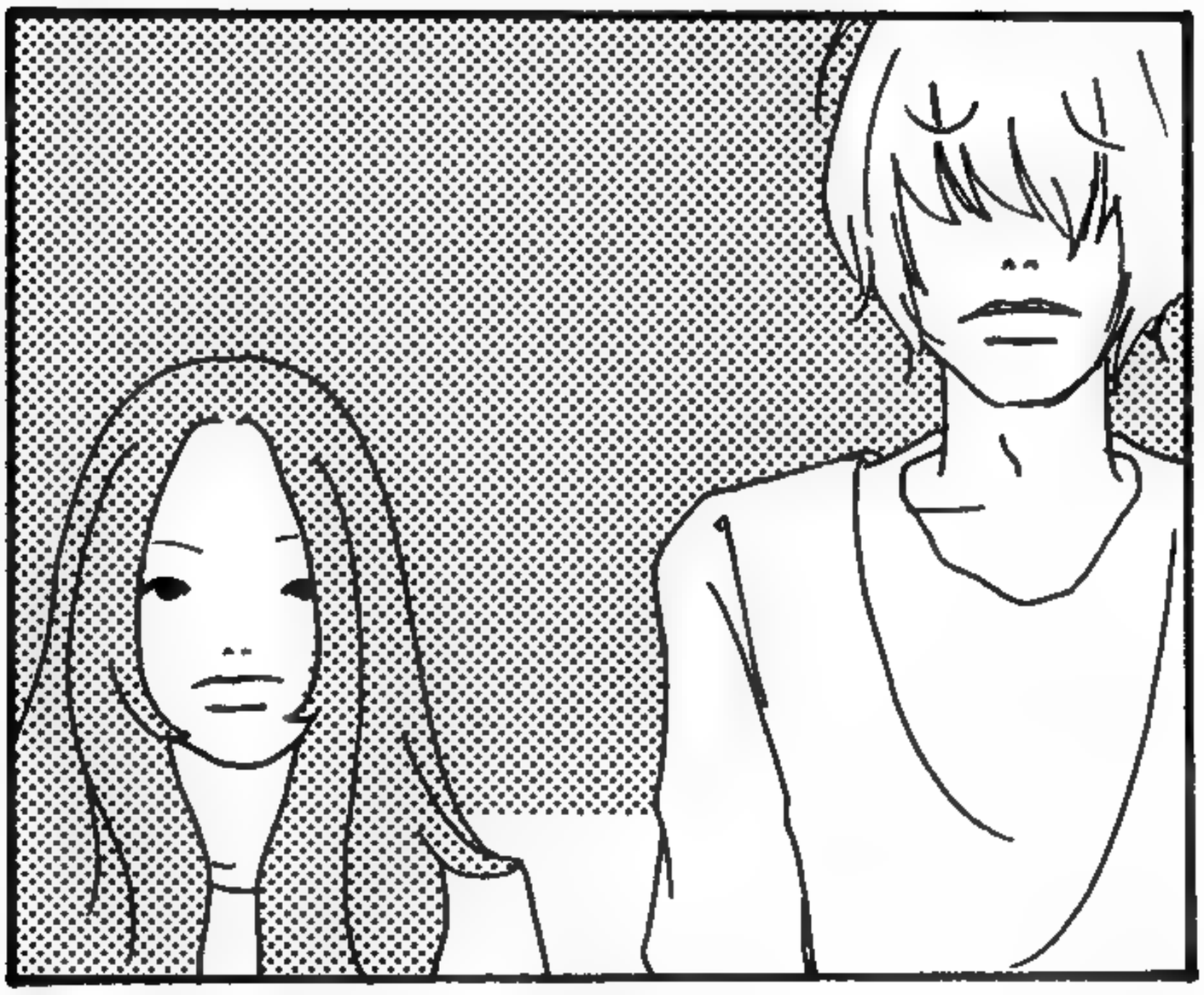
THE BOSS...

*Takuan: A popular traditional Japanese pickle. (Wiki)

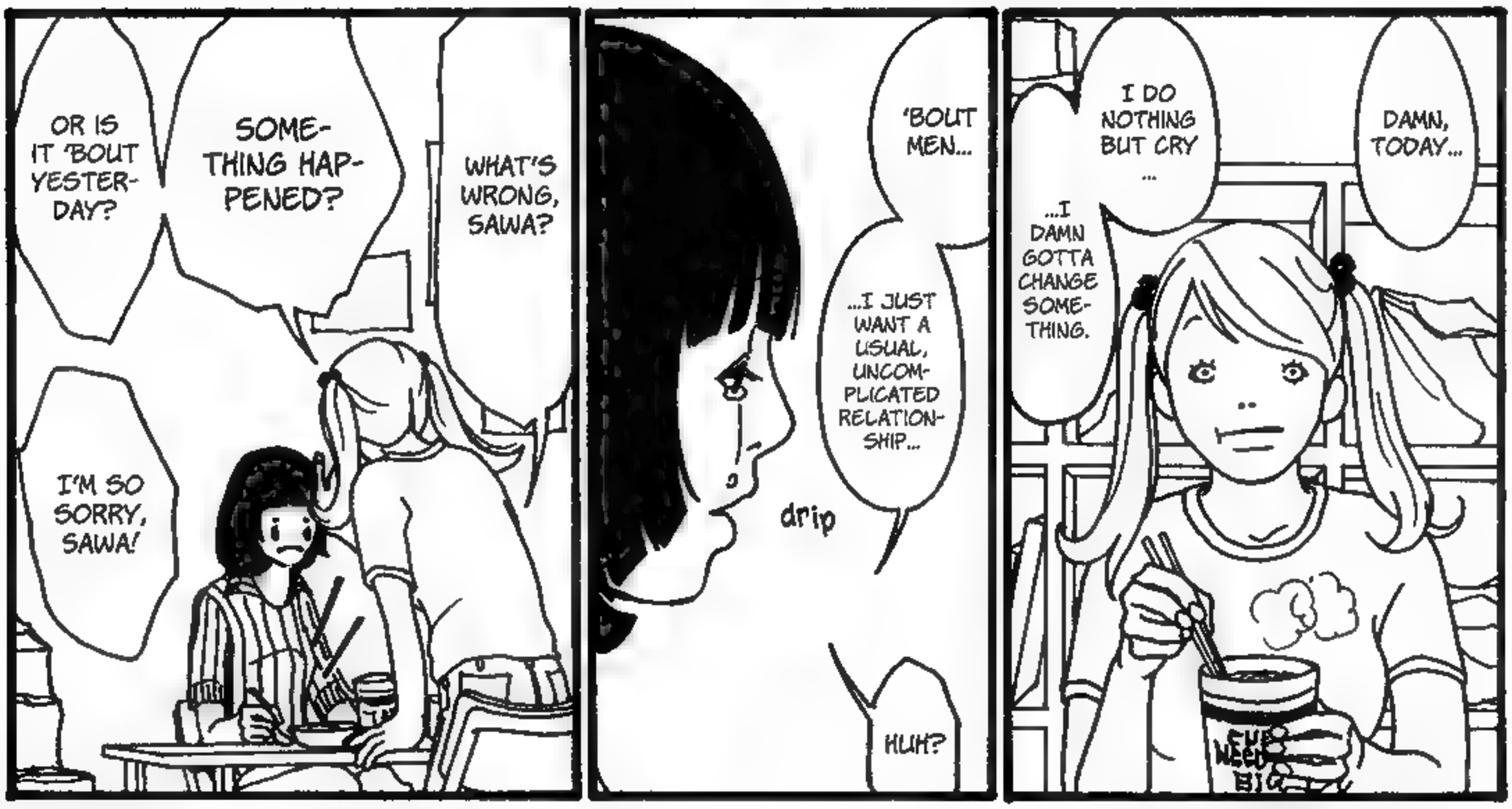
THAT'S... THAT'S WRONG...

THIS IS ALL A MISTAKE. SORRY.

I ran away And those takuan in their bag, I just couldn't forget about them



Yellowish, cheap takuan That really burned itself right into my mind



But actually it's right I finally had to realize, that banal everyday life's what matters most

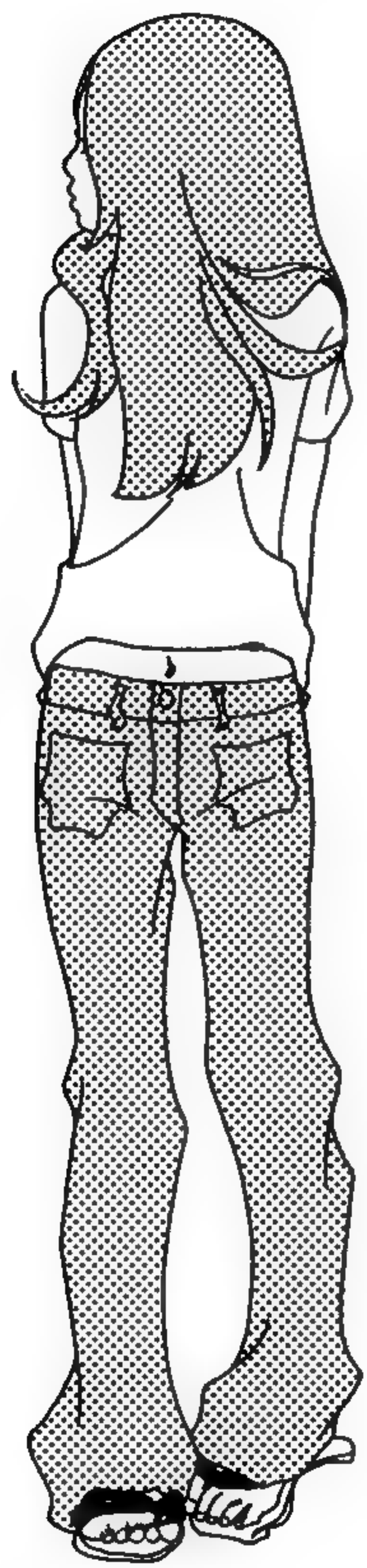
Back in the day, I always had to eat mom's terribly overcooked meals at home Even then I always asked myself, why everything was so ordinary

But yesterday, I came to understand that that's what real love is like

Just like those two yesterday

Love, that's expressed through modest things Like takuan.. Suddenly I knew exactly what I'd been dreaming of

My Life
Third Example: She



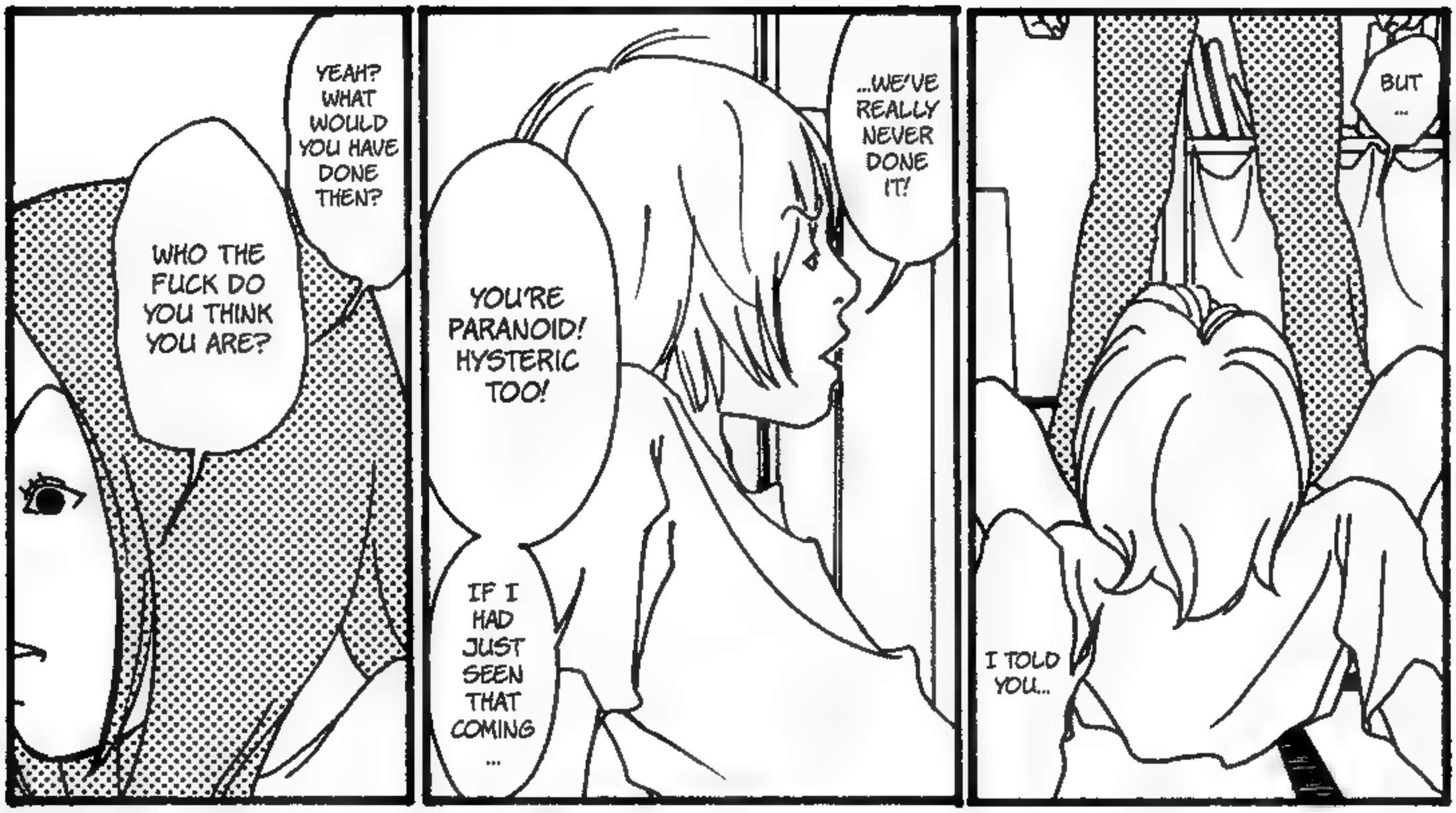
I lived together with a guy
He was a dud, but I just didn't wanna see it.

If I had asked my friends, they'd answered something
along the lines of "Just split up with that fool",
"Damn, how can anyone live like that?!" or "If you don't manage
to get rid of that guy, you're actually really messed up"

I know, everyone'd have told me so

Like in that old TV series "Bewitched", with all of
Samantha's family badmouthing her husband.

SO HOW COME SHE'S HERE WAITING FOR YOU?! DON'T FUCK WITH ME!
AWH!
I TOLD YOU, WE'VE NEVER DONE IT.
AND DAMN WHO'S THAT BITCH ANYWAY? NEVER SEEN ANY-BODY THAT FUCKED UP!
DAMN... YA REALLY INCREDI-BLE...!
PAF
RAAAH!
OUCH!
AWH, JUST SKIP IT. JUST THINKING 'BOUT IT MAKES ME THROW UP.
CHIKADA, YOU'RE AN ASSHOLE!
YA REALLY GOTTA FUCK ANY DAMN SLUT YA SEE?!


YEAH? WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE THEN?
WHO THE FUCK DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
...WE'VE REALLY NEVER DONE IT!
YOU'RE PARANOID! HYSTERIC TOO!
IF I HAD JUST SEEN THAT COMING ...
BUT ...
I TOLD YOU...

That moment I knew we were gonna break up.

I was completely sure of it

It was too late, I couldn't possibly go back anymore..

AND DAMN LET GO OF ME!

JUST SKIP IT, K?

BUT ...

UH...

WAIT!

DON'T YOU JUST FEED ME 'CAUSE YOU LIKE LIVING THIS WAY? YOU DON'T WANT ME TO WORK, AND YOU WANNA PAY MY RENT.

...BUT I AIN'T YOUR DAMN PET!

YOU LIKE IT...

BYE...

WON'T BE ENOUGH TO PAY YOU BACK FOR EVERY-THING, BUT AT LEAST A BIT...

TAKE MY MUSIC AND SELL IT, THAT'LL AT LEAST GET YOU SOME MONEY.

WHAM

100

UGH ...

YOU ...

I'M SORRY!

FOR-GIVE ME! STAY WITH ME!

PLEASE, STAY WITH ME. YOU CAN'T HATE ME THIS MUCH...

...

LISTEN, IF YOU DON'T LOVE ME ANY-MORE, I'LL DO ANYTHING SO YOU'LL LIKE ME AGAIN.

I DON'T WANNA LOSE YOU; I WAS SO AFRAID!

IT JUST HURT ME SO MUCH ...

I'M SORRY! I'M SO SORRY!

I DON'T WANT YOU TO LEAVE! THERE'S JUST NO REASON ...

I DIDN'T MEAN IT!

SKIP IT!

IT'S NOT 'BOUT THE MONEY! I DIDN'T WANNA SAY IT LIKE THAT!

HEY! LET GO OF ME.

CHIKADA! I'M SO SORRY!

...

OKAY ...

PLEASE EXCUSE ME...

I'M SORRY ...

CAN'T YOU FORGIVE ME A LAST TIME?

ENOUGH OF THAT DRAMA. YOU'RE ANNOYING ME.

I NEVER SAID I DIDN'T LOVE YOU ANYMORE!

(I was dragged along (yeah, I was clinging to him and he dragged me along like a rag) to the station.

It was already very late and we were the only ones around. We just had just jumped over the barrier. On the platform everything was silent. The silence was stifling, and said nothing either.

SPLAT!

SCRATCH
SCRATCH
SCRATCH

JUST QUIT CRYING. THAT'S AWFUL.

...YOU GOT A TISSUE?

sniff

YOU THINK I'D THOUGHT OF STUFF LIKE THAT BEFORE?

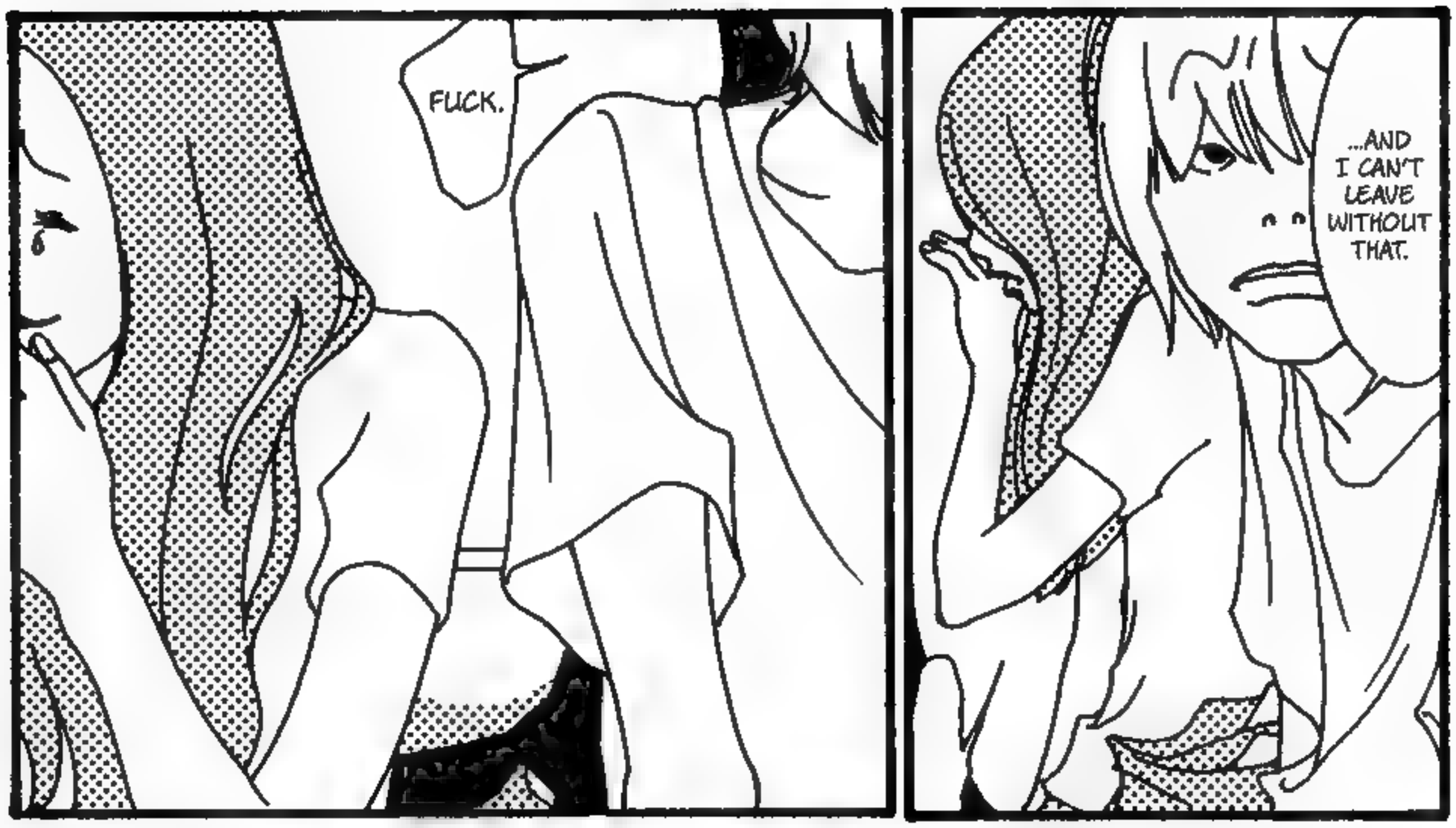
WHAT'S MUCH WORSE: I FORGOT MY WALLET...

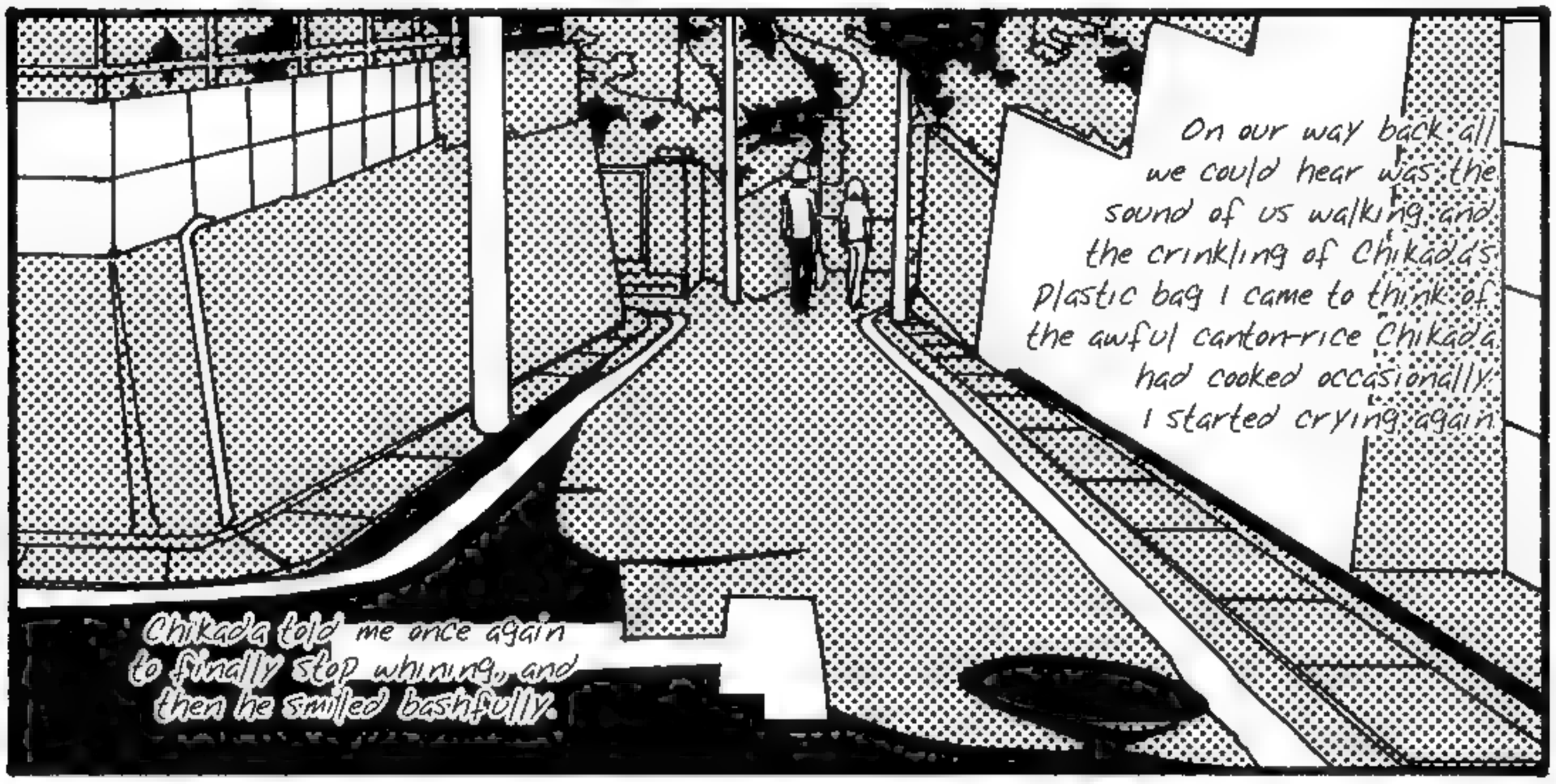
...

...

CHIKA-DA...

Even if he hadn't forgotten it, where could that idiot Chikada have gone to?




On our way back all we could hear was the sound of us walking and the crinkling of Chikada's plastic bag I came to think of the awful canton-rice Chikada had cooked occasionally. I started crying again.
Chikada told me once again to finally stop whining, and then he smiled bashfully.

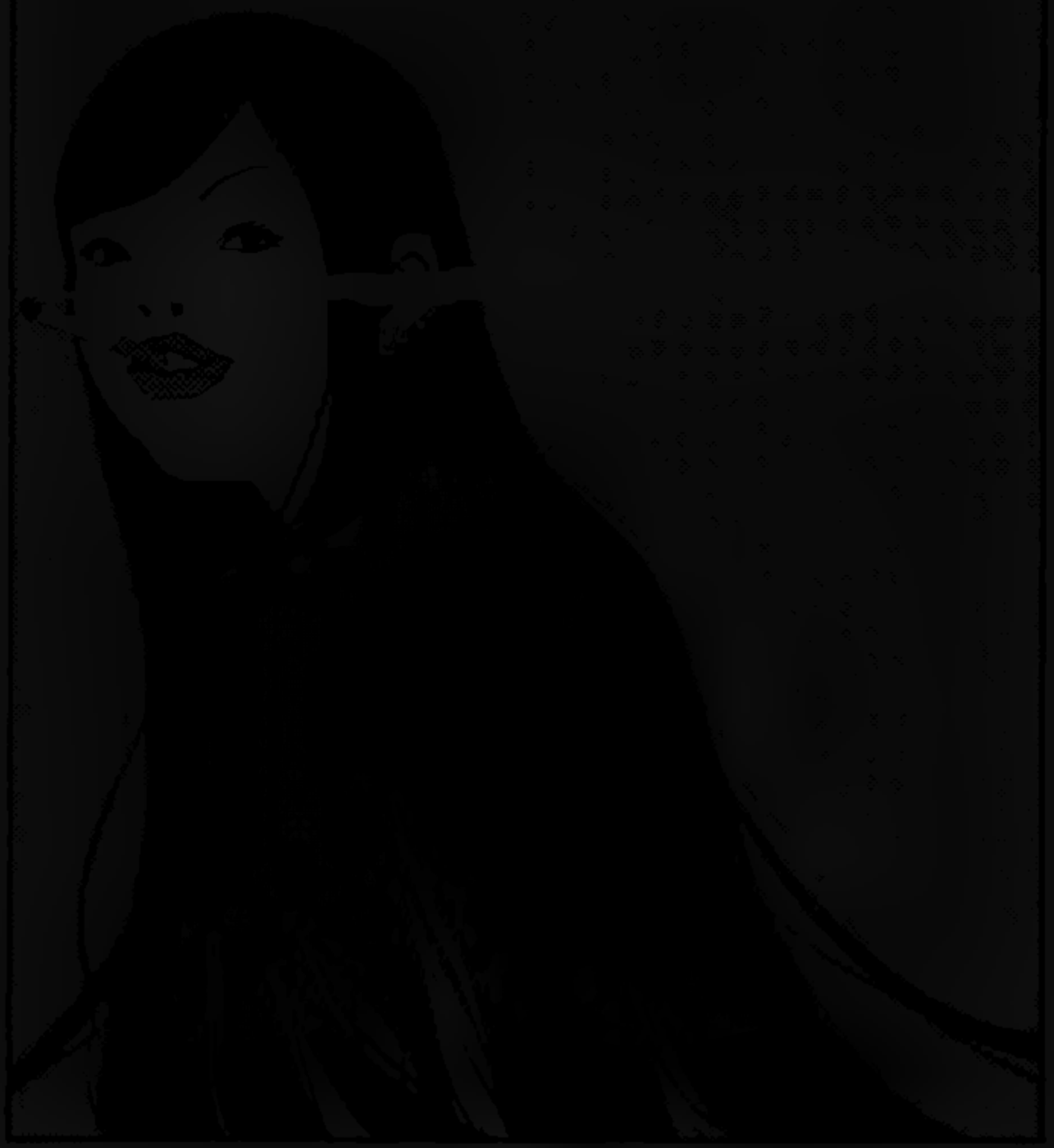
We're fighting, we're making it up, we're going round in circles As if it was fate, we always end up where we've started.

And Samantha keeps on loving her silly husband.

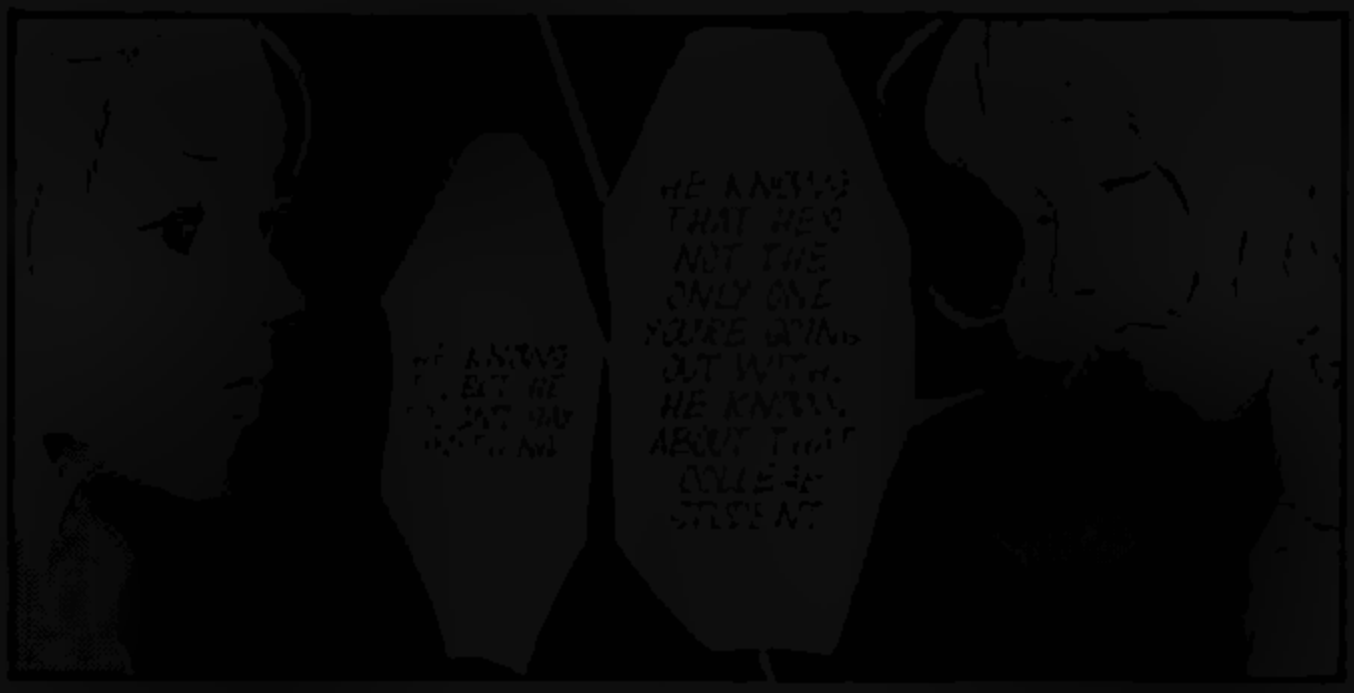
That's it, and actually it's not so bad

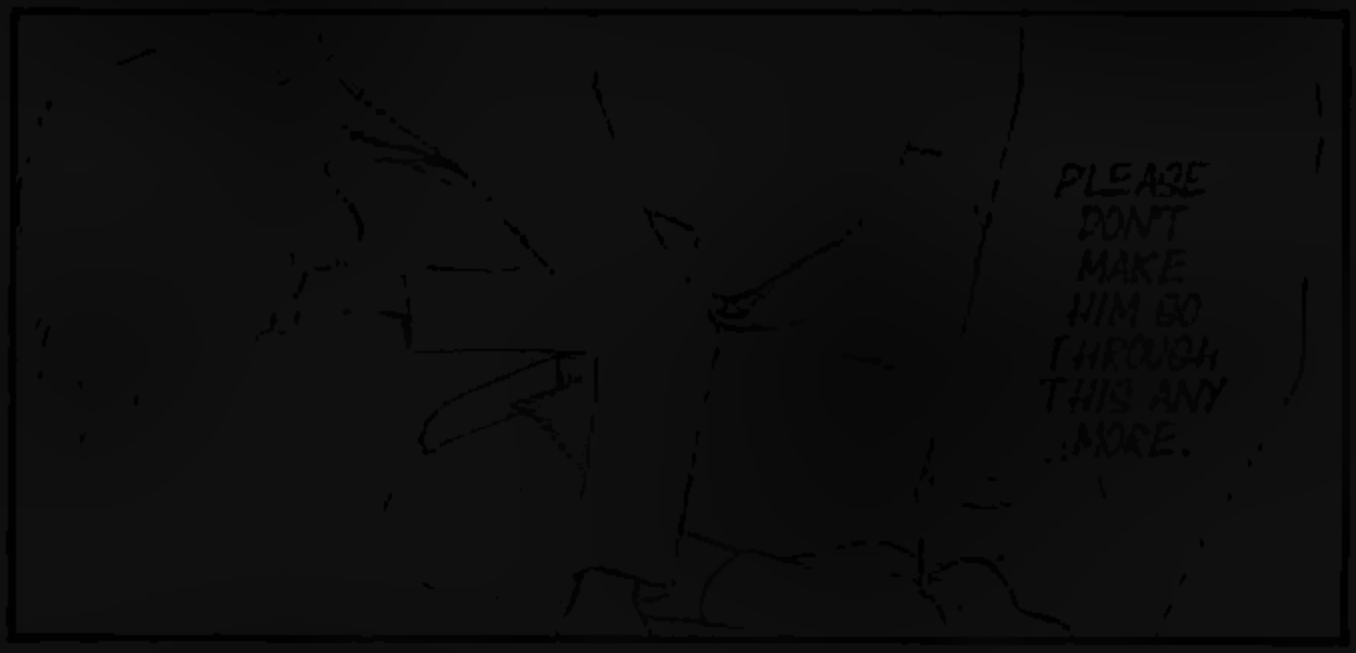
That's it, and may this luck last forever!

HOLIDAY PART 2

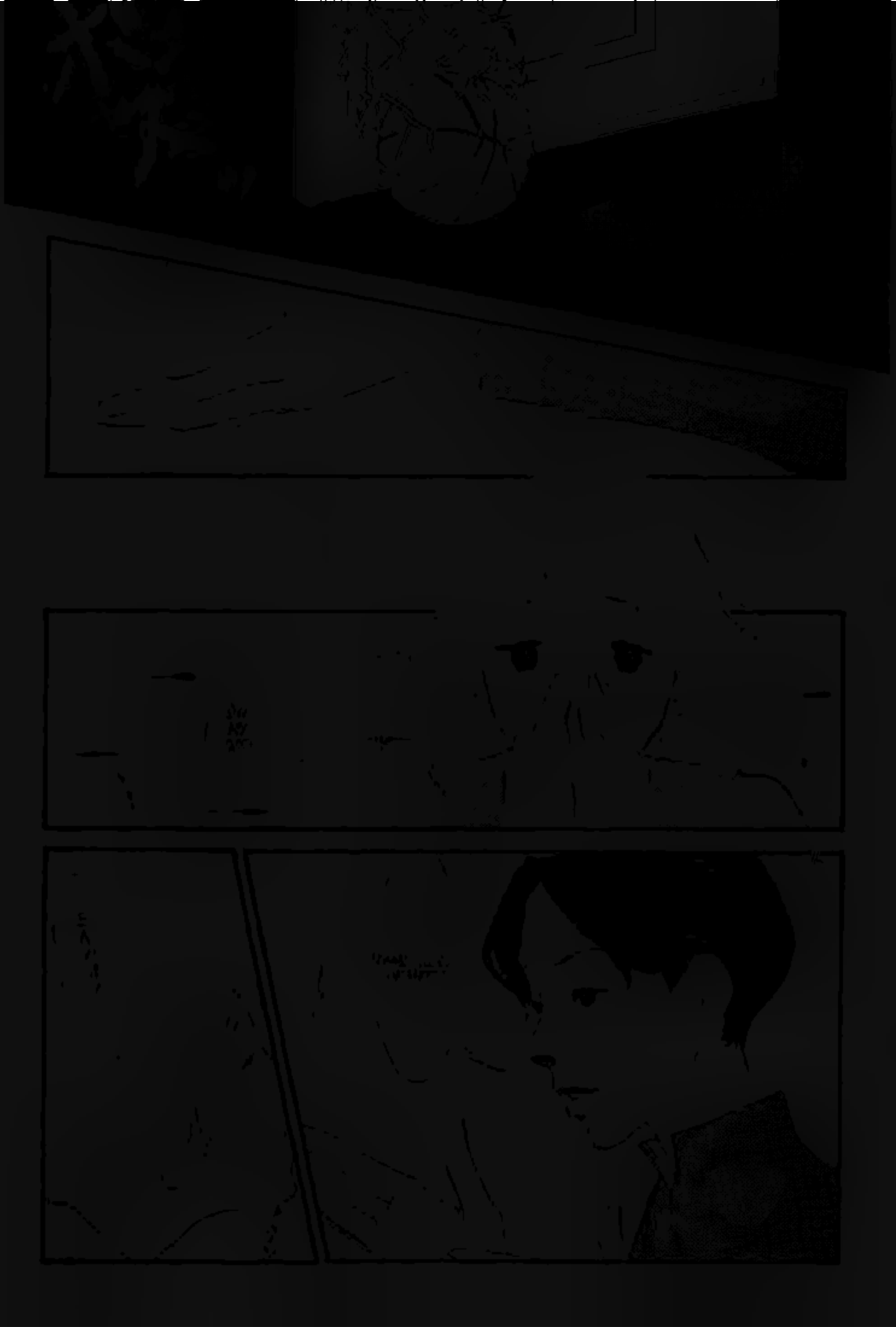


I HAVE FEELINGS FOR HIM.
...
THIS PAIN IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE PAIN THAT HANJI-SENPAI MUST FEEL
THIS PAIN


HE KNOWS THAT HE'S NOT THE ONLY ONE YOU'RE DOING OUT WITH. HE KNOWS ABOUT THAT COLLEGE STUDENT.

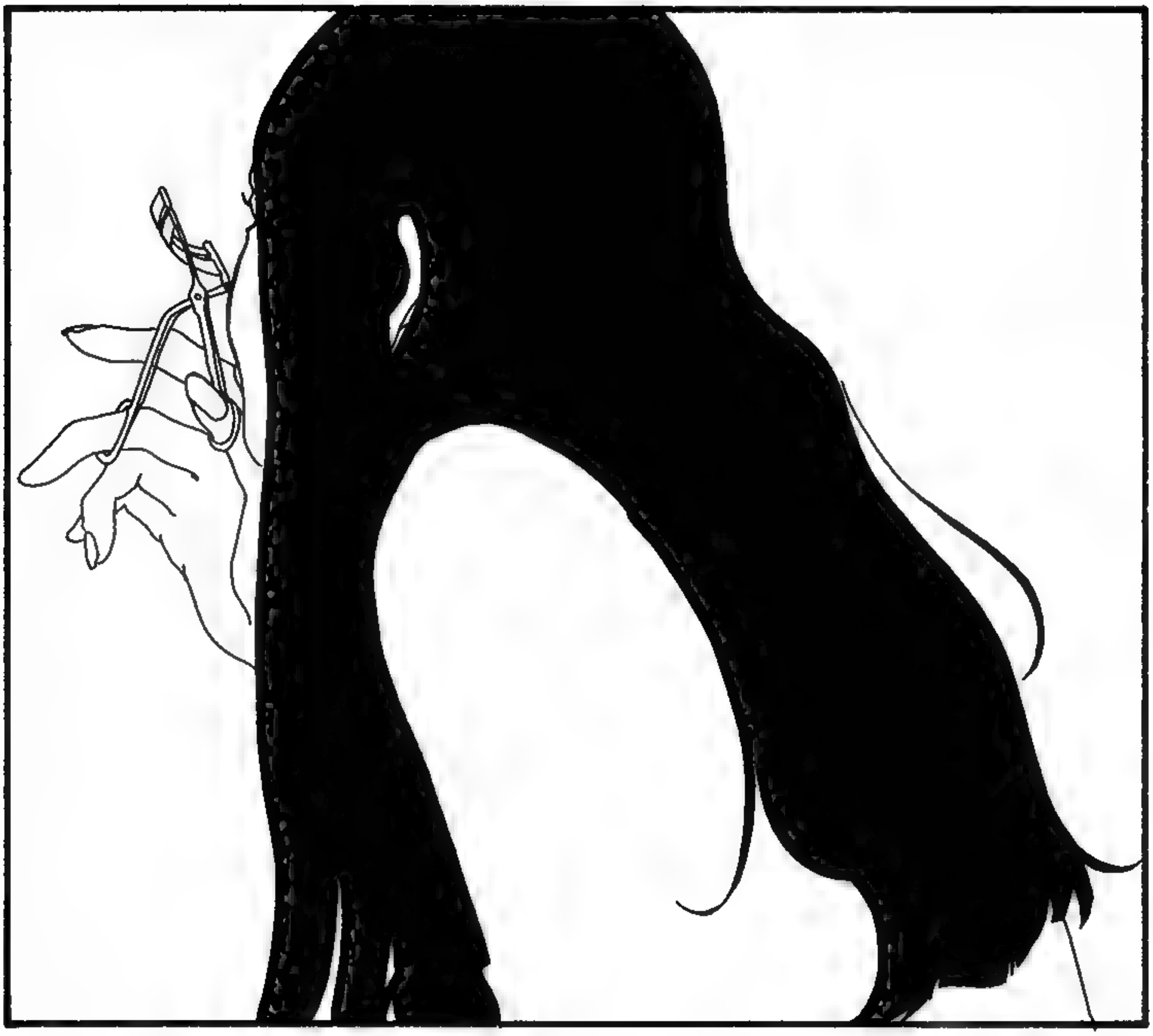

PLEASE DON'T MAKE HIM GO THROUGH THIS ANY MORE.

WHR
ARE YOU
GOING
CHOOSE.
ME OR
HER.
SO
YOU
LIKE
THIS
GIRL
?!
AAAAAA!
LET'S
MAKE
A BET.



THE END.
ARE THESE PEOPLE STUPID?
WHOA, WHOA, WHOA, WAIT A MINUTE.

GET AN ERECTION FOR CHRIST'S SAKE OPEN UP YOUR PUSSY GOD I HATE THIS AUTHOR GOES TO HELL
JESUS, WHAT'S UP WITH THE FLOWERS AND HUGS?
MAN I NEED TO GET LAID
WHAT A STRANGE MANGA
PFFT
I THINK THERE WAS AN EARTHQUAKE IN HERE



Sweet

I'll freak out.

I could smash everything to bits.

That asshole.

DIDN'T YOU SCHEDULE TO MEET AT 11:30 PM?

THAT'S WHY!

YOU KNOW HIM, HE'S NEVER ON TIME.

HE'S MUCH TOO LATE! TAKUJI, THAT BASTARD!

IT'S SO COLD!

I could smash everything to bits.

FINALLY. DAMN, TAKUJI!

AS A PENALTY, YOU'LL TREAT US TO A MEAL AT YOSHINOYA* LATER.

SORRY, I'M LATE.

Yoshinoya: chain of fast-food restaurants

HELLO.

OK, LET'S GO.

HI.

HE, HE, I SAW YOU TWO! YOU JUST KISSED!

HOW DOES THAT CONCERN YOU? JUST LET US!

WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE ACTOR?

AND WHAT WAS THE TITLE AGAIN?

YOU REMEMBER THE CRAZY GARDENER, WHO BECAME THE FAMILY FRIEND?

THAT EVENING A FEW DAYS AGO, WHEN WE WATCHED THE OLD JAPANESE MOVIE ON TV.

SHE WOULDN'T, SHE WAS ASLEEP.

DON'T YOU KNOW IT, SHIZU-KO?

DANKICHI, WITH THE BIG NOSE?

I JUST CAN'T RE-MEMBER...

WHO WAS IT AGAIN?

RIGHT, WHAT WAS HIS NAME...

RIGHT, IT WAS HIM!

STOP, WASN'T IT HAJIME HANA?

NAH, HE LOOKS COMPLETELY DIFFERENT.

HAJIME HANA...

THE NOSE OF DANKICHI WASN'T SO WRONG, SHI-ZUKO.

YEAH HANA* NOSE!

YOU ALWAYS FALL ASLEEP, AND AFTERWARDS YOU KNOW IT BETTER!

Note: The kanji for Hana means nose in this case

I'll go crazy.

I feel hypnotized by the movement of his tongue in his mouth. I imagine it was in my...

IS HE ALL RIGHT?

NAH. HE'S OUT OF IT.

HE'LL NEVER CHANGE, AS WE CAN SEE!

HA HA HA

I'VE USED UP MY STAMPS AND MONEY. BUT YOU GO, I DON'T NEED ANY-THING.

FUCK IT. WANNA GO GET SOME-THING TO DRINK?

HERE.

WHICH DO YOU WANT?

AND HIM...

WHILE HE'S PASSED OUT, SOME-ONE ELSE TAKES SHIZU-KO. DOESN'T HE CARE?

I JUST DON'T LIKE TO DRINK ALONE.

WHAT? WHY?

AH OK..? YES, THANKS.

WELL... MAYBE IT'S NOT REALLY SAFE.

I DUNNO IF ME BEING AROUND REALLY DOES RELIE-VE HIM.

AS LONG AS YOU'RE AROUND, TAKUJI, HE DOESN'T NEED TO WORRY.

TAKUJI, I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO TELL YOU THAT I LIKE YOU VERY MUCH ...

THANKS ...

...FOR THE DRINK.

SHIZU-KO...

YOU THINK IT'S BAD OF ME TO TELL YOU?

I'm a beast.

I'll go crazy.

A beast.
I can't control myself.

Painful Love III

SO.

WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?

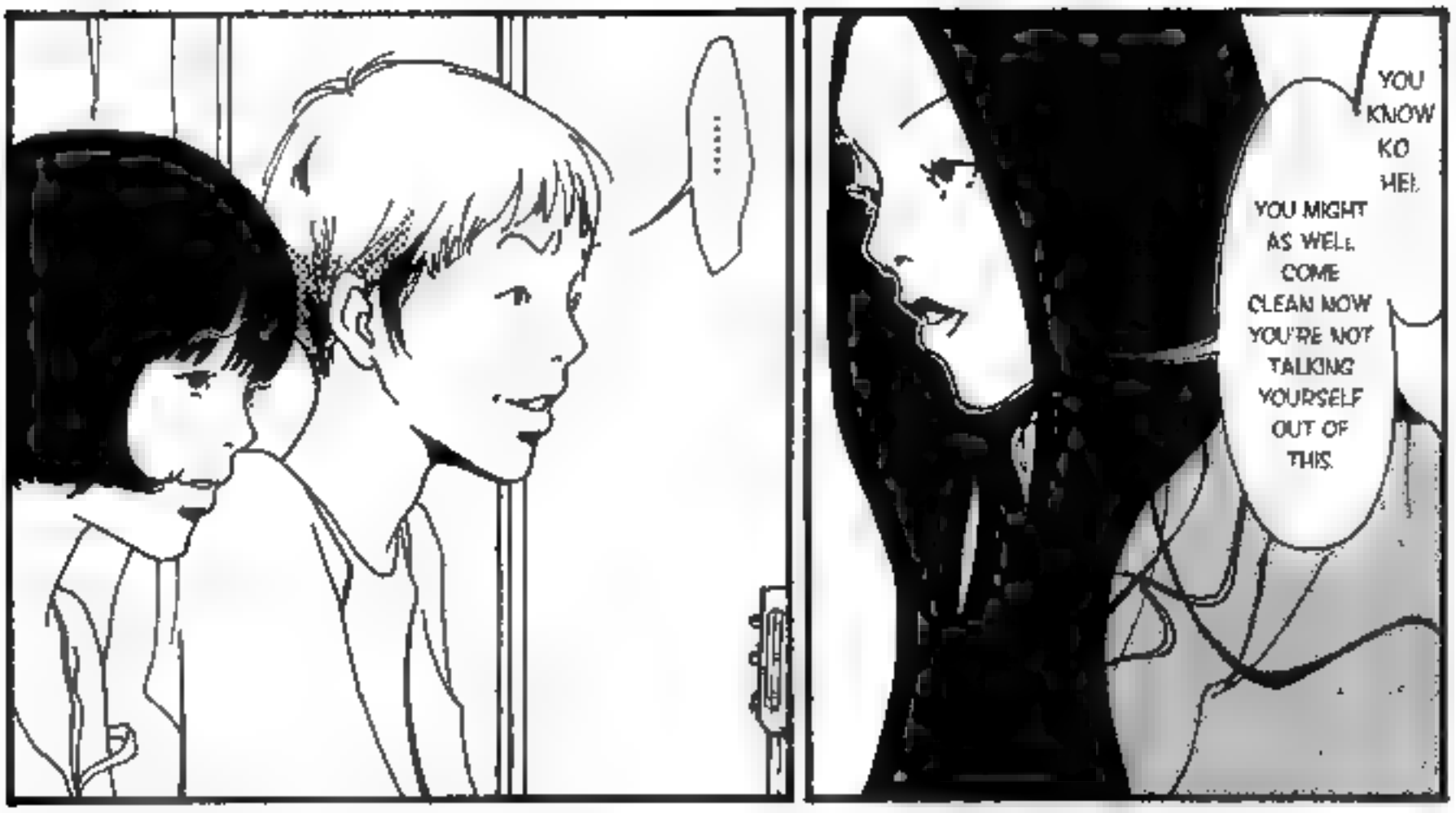
WHAT ARE YOU GONNA DO?

UM

WELL

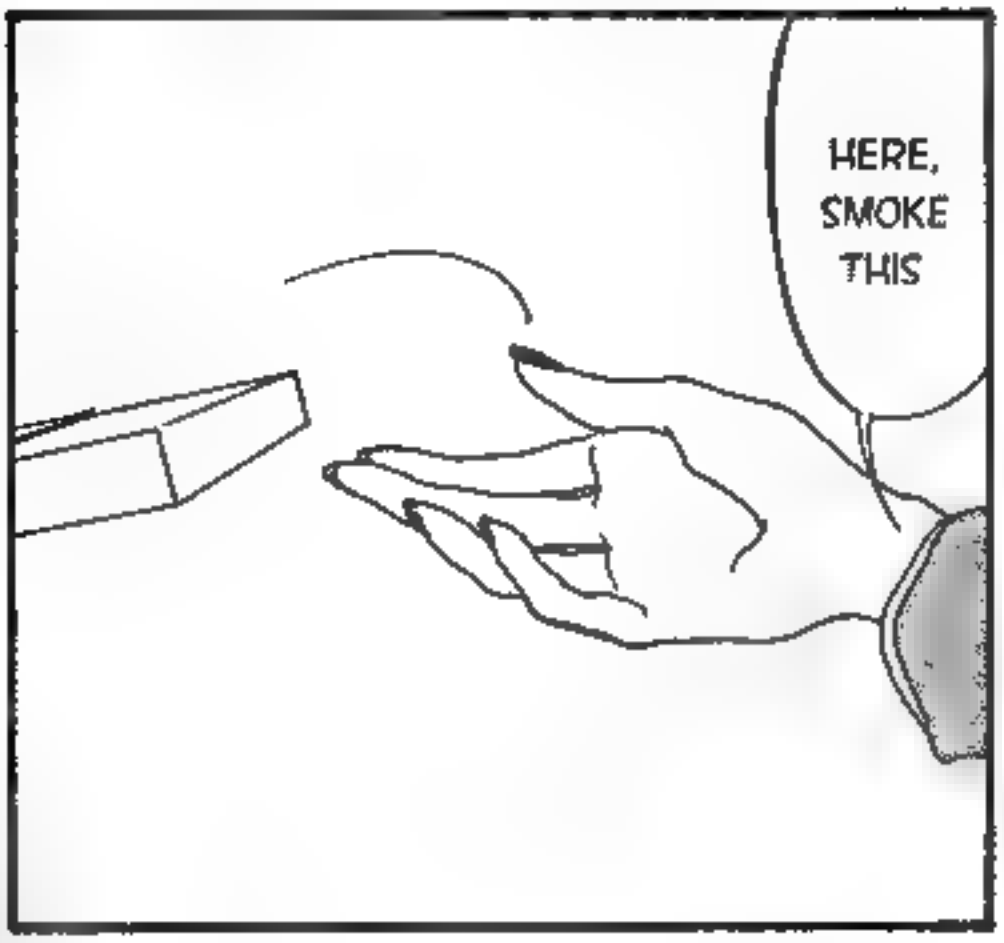
YOU SEE, THIS IS

I DIDN'T ASK **YOU**


.....
YOU KNOW KO HEI.
YOU MIGHT AS WELL COME CLEAN NOW YOU'RE NOT TALKING YOURSELF OUT OF THIS.

RUN-NING AWAY?
UM I THINK I'LL GO BUY SOME CIG-ARETTES

AH.
UM THANK YOU


HERE, SMOKE THIS

MS. NOGUCHI, WAS IT?

UM NO, IT S NOUCHI

WELL I

YES, HE TALKED ABOUT YOU FROM TIME TO TIME

WELL THEN MS NOUCHI DID YOU KNOW THAT KOHEI WAS ALREADY TAKEN?

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT ME?

COM-PLAINTS?

UM NO

IT WAS MORE LIKE TAKING OUT A LOAN ON YOUR ACCOUNT TO BUY A GUITAR BOR ROWING MONEY FROM YOU THAT KIND OF STUFF

.....

OH, I SEE

SO YOU KNEW ALL THAT AND YOU **STILL** HAD THE NERVE TO BARGE IN ON OUR RELATION-SHIP?

UM

I THINK I'LL GO GET SOME CIGA-RETTES AFTER ALL

OH I'M SORRY

ON THE BED

MMM?

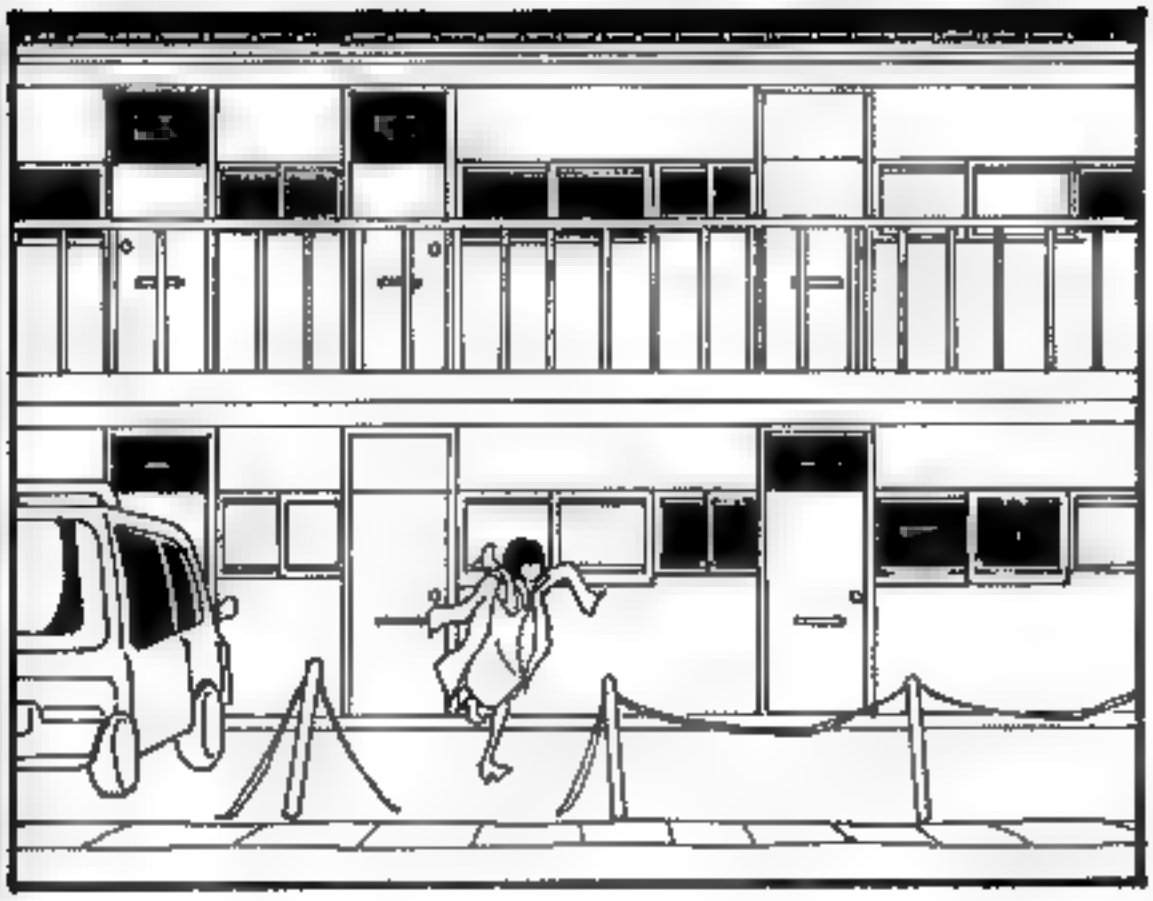
YOUR UNDER-WEAR

HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT KOHEI?

MS. NOU-CHI.

A-HA.

HA HA HA.



TA
TA
TA

TA

THERE YOU ARE

HAHA.

YEAH.

THIS IS PRETTY CORNY, I GUESS.

HE HE

HAHA WHAT IS THIS. A SOAP OPERA?

YOU DON'T HAVE TO COME AFTER ME

I LEFT THE PLACE WITHOUT A WORD, MAN

YEAH

WELL SHE FOUND US

YOU THOUGHT SHE WAS SCARY? HOW DO YOU THINK I FELT?!

I MEAN SHIT SHE WAS PRETTY SCARY

I MEAN, GOING OUT WITH HER WAS LIKE

OH WELL

HA HA

I DUNNO, LIKE AN OBLIGA-TION?

LIKE BEING WITH MY PARENTS OR SOME-THING.

SHE JUST WANTED TO GET SOMETHING BACK FOR ALL THE STUFF SHE DID FOR ME

YOU KNOW, HER PRIDE AND THAT SHIT

IT WAS PROBABLY LIKE THAT FOR HER TOO

SHE DIDN'T **REALLY** LOVE ME OR ANY-THING.

I MEAN CASE IN POINT HER ATTITUDE TODAY LIKE YOU'D THINK SHE'D MAKE A BIG FUSS ABOUT THE WHOLE THING.

BUT SHE WAS SO MATTER-OF-FACT ABOUT IT YOU KNOW?

IT JUST GOES TO SHOW THAT WE WERE PRACTICALLY FINISHED

DO YOU REALLY LIKE ME?

OH GEEZ THANKS.

I THINK

I THINK A PART OF IT WAS BECAUSE YOU BELONGED TO SOMEONE ELSE

I REALLY LIKE YOU BUT

BUT

I CAN'T SEE MYSELF LENDING YOU ANY MONEY.

BUT YEAH. I THINK I REALLY LIKE YOU

I'M GONNA GO BACK THERE I NEED TO TELL HER

I DON'T WANNA DEPEND ON GIRLS FOR MONEY ANYMORE

YEAH

WHA

DOES THAT

.MEAN WE CAN GO OUT?

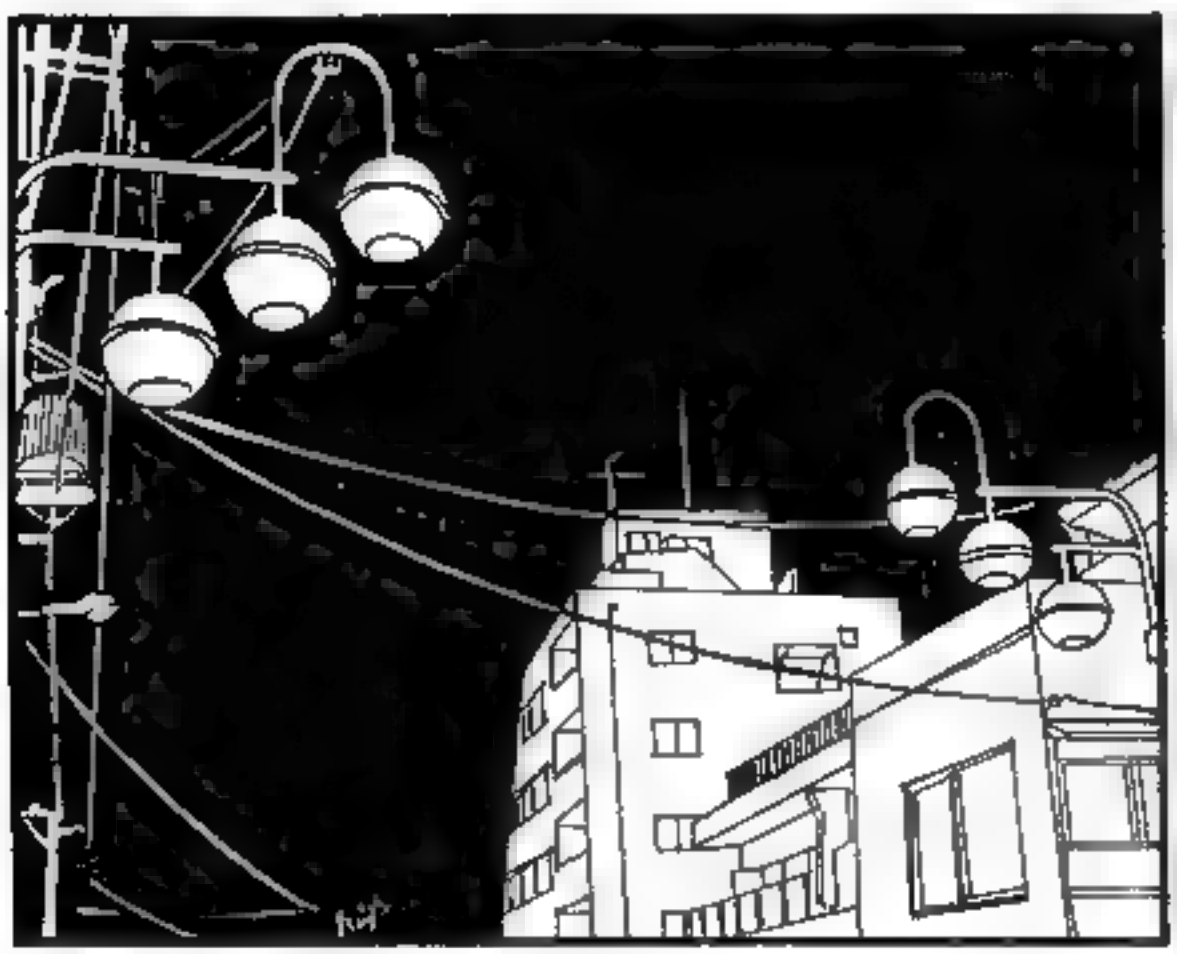
ARE YOU SURE?

COME ON LET'S GO TOGETH ER

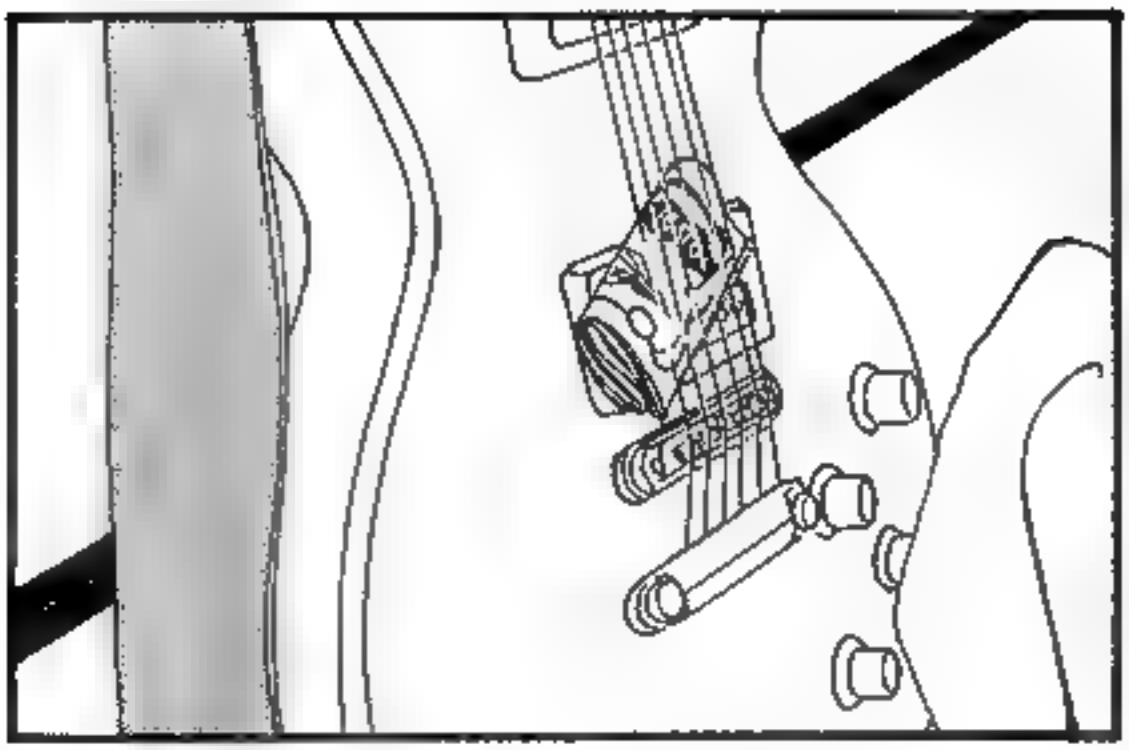
DO YOU WANNA COME?

YEAH,
I M SURE
WHAT
ABOUT
YOU?

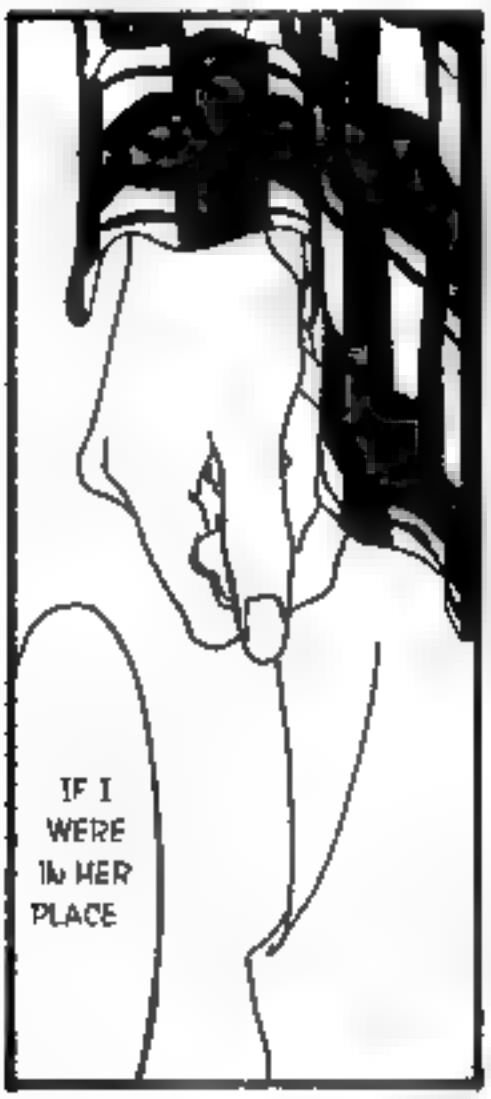
COME ON.
STOP CRYING
LET'S GO.



NO.
NOT
THAT
LOOK
KO-
HEI



NOT THE KEY THE MONEY
OVER THERE IN THE GUI-TAR


IF I WERE IN HER PLACE

THE FIRST THING I'D PROBABLY DO WAS SMASH THAT GUITAR

I THINK THAT SAYS MORE ABOUT YOUR FEELINGS FOR HER THAN ANY-THING.

AND THE FIRST THING **YOU** SAW WASN'T THE MONEY BUT THE KEY SHE LEFT

SHE DID ALL THOSE THINGS FOR YOU OUT OF LOVE SHE REALLY DID LOVE YOU

IT WASN'T ABOUT GETTING SOMETHING BACK KOHEI IT WASN'T ABOUT HER PRIDE

GOOD THING YOU DIDN'T GO AND SAY THAT TO HER HUH?

SO MUCH FOR BREAKING UP AND GOING OUT WITH ME

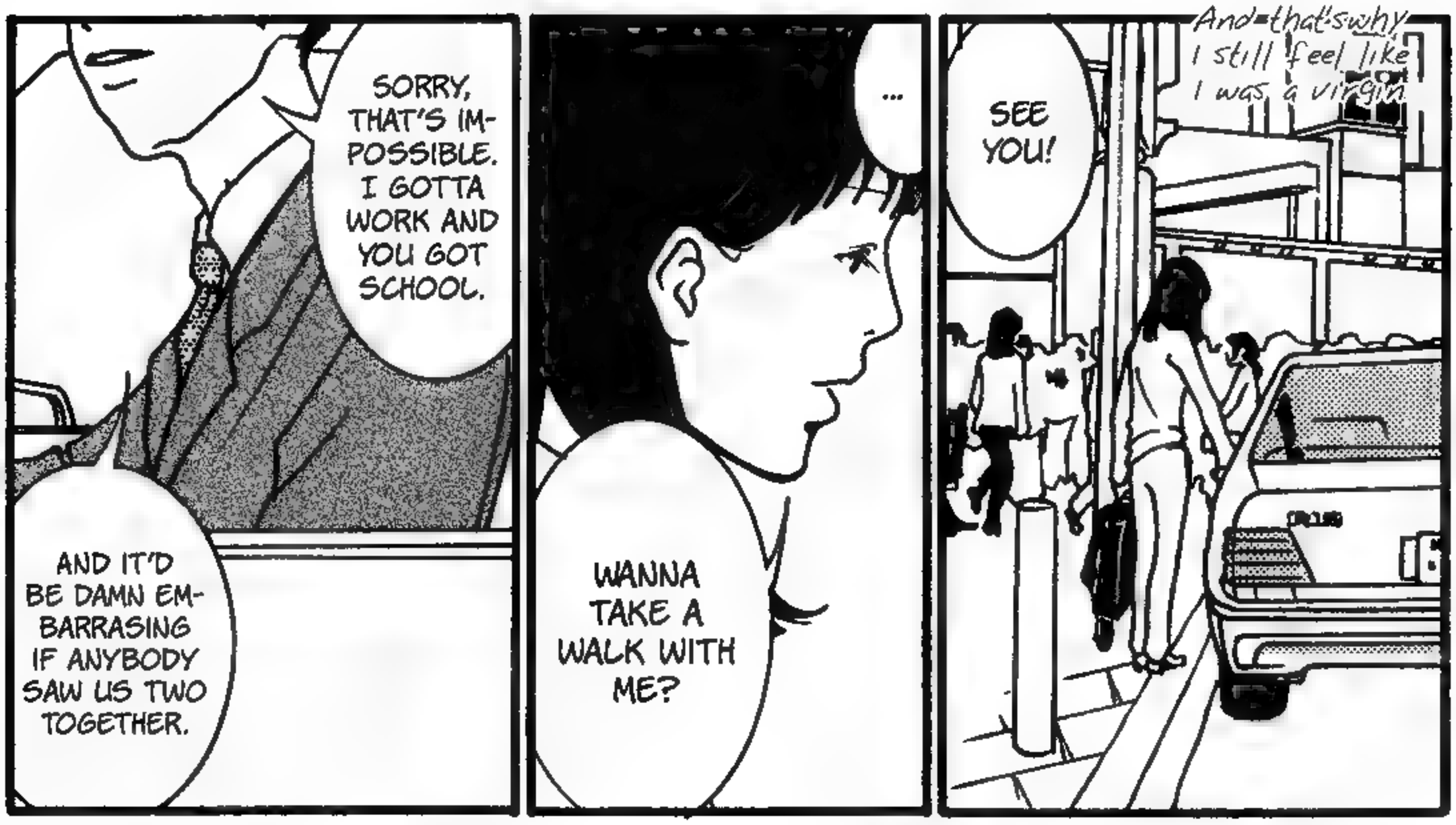
DON'T YOU WANT TO GO AFTER HER?

The First Time

making love in the night and being together at daytime, those are two different things

Going side by side in one's everyday life, that's the proof for one to really love and be loved

Sleeping with someone without loving him, That's like staying a virgin


SORRY, THAT'S IM-POSSIBLE. I GOTTA WORK AND YOU GOT SCHOOL.
AND IT'D BE DAMN EM-BARRASING IF ANYBODY SAW US TWO TOGETHER.
...
WANNA TAKE A WALK WITH ME?
SEE YOU!
And that's why I still feel like I was a virgin

AND THAT MOMENT, WHEN I WAS ABOUT TO STICK IT IN...

HAHA HAHA

I'M SO DAMN CRAZY FOR THAT HAG!

"IS IT POSSIBLE?! IT'S YOUR FIRST TIME?!?"

...THAT WOMAN, WHO WAS QUITE A BIT OLDER THAN ME, REALLY SAID...

TO-TALLY SO!

AND I'M STILL A VIRGIN!

SO, A FAIL?

AND MY BONER WORE OFF...

HA HA HA

TILL THEN I HAD ACTED COOL, BUT SUDDENLY I BLUSHED ...

UH ...

YUKIO!

IN THE END IT'S ALL THE SAME!

I AIN'T IMPOTENT, I'M JUST UNTOUCHED! THAT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT!

PSH!

KEEP IT DOWN!

DAMN, KEEP IT DOWN!

OH LORD, YUKIO! YOU'RE IMPOTENT AT AGE 19?

GOTTA THROW UP...

UARGH!

UARGH!

COUGH

AH ...

YOU ...

SAWAKO IS TAKING CARE OF HIM.

WHAT ABOUT HIM?

WHERE SHOULD WE GO?

BUT I'D BE UP FOR MORE.

LORD, WE'VE DRUNK-EN SO MUCH!

NAH, DON'T THINK SO.

THEY'RE DATING?

AWH... I FEEL SICK...

DID I TALK MUCH BULLSHIT EARLIER?

WELL... NOT REALLY.

DIDN'T REALLY LISTEN.

YUKIO ...

CAN I KISS YOU?

FOR REAL?

TOLD YOU.

LIES!

...

AH NO-THING... FORGET IT...

WHY DID I SAY THAT?

KISS ME?!

WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?

AND I SUCK AT KISSING... I THINK...

THERE'S A BITTER TASTE IN MY MOUTH...

YOU AIN'T NO VIRGIN, RIGHT?

YOU'RE ALREADY EXPIRI-ENCED.

FOR-GET IT.

IT DOESN'T MATTER.

I'm not making fun of you

AARGH...

NOW I'VE REALLY MESSED IT UP.

I'M FED UP WITH EXPERTS.

UARGH...

YES... BUT...

THEN IT'S A NO.

SEARCH FOR A HOTEL, I GOT THE MONEY.

AHA...

OKAY...

BUT I THOUGHT, YOU DIDN'T LIKE ME.

OH. I'M FEELING SO SICK...

COULD YOU...

...TAKE ME SOMEWHERE TO SLEEP?

THAT'S SOMETHING ELSE.

I'M DEAD TIRED, JUST WANNA SLEEP.

...

...

...

URGH!

UGH ...

THIS IS THE HELL.

Sleeping with him now will make
it hurt even more I know that, but.

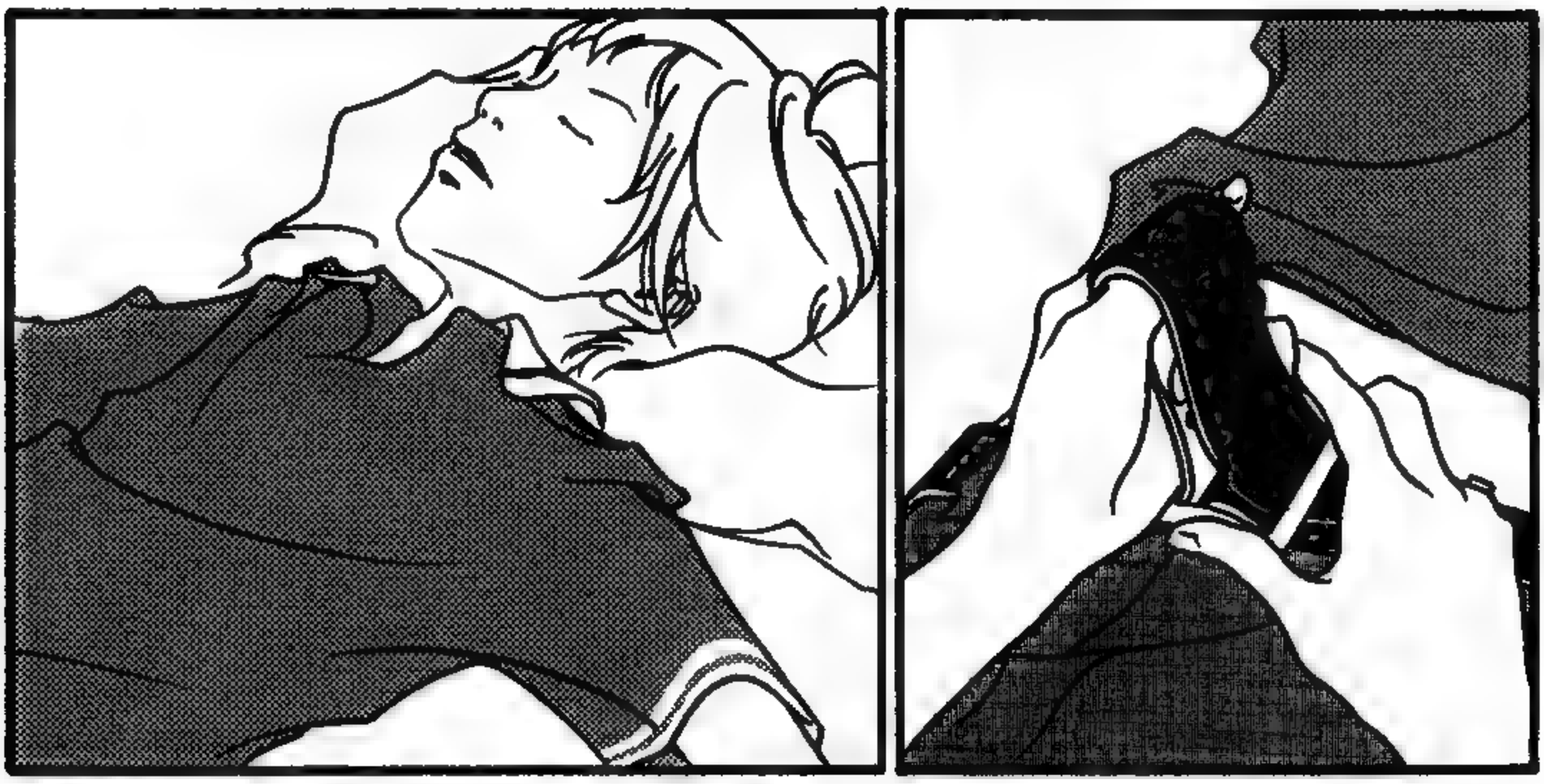
But.

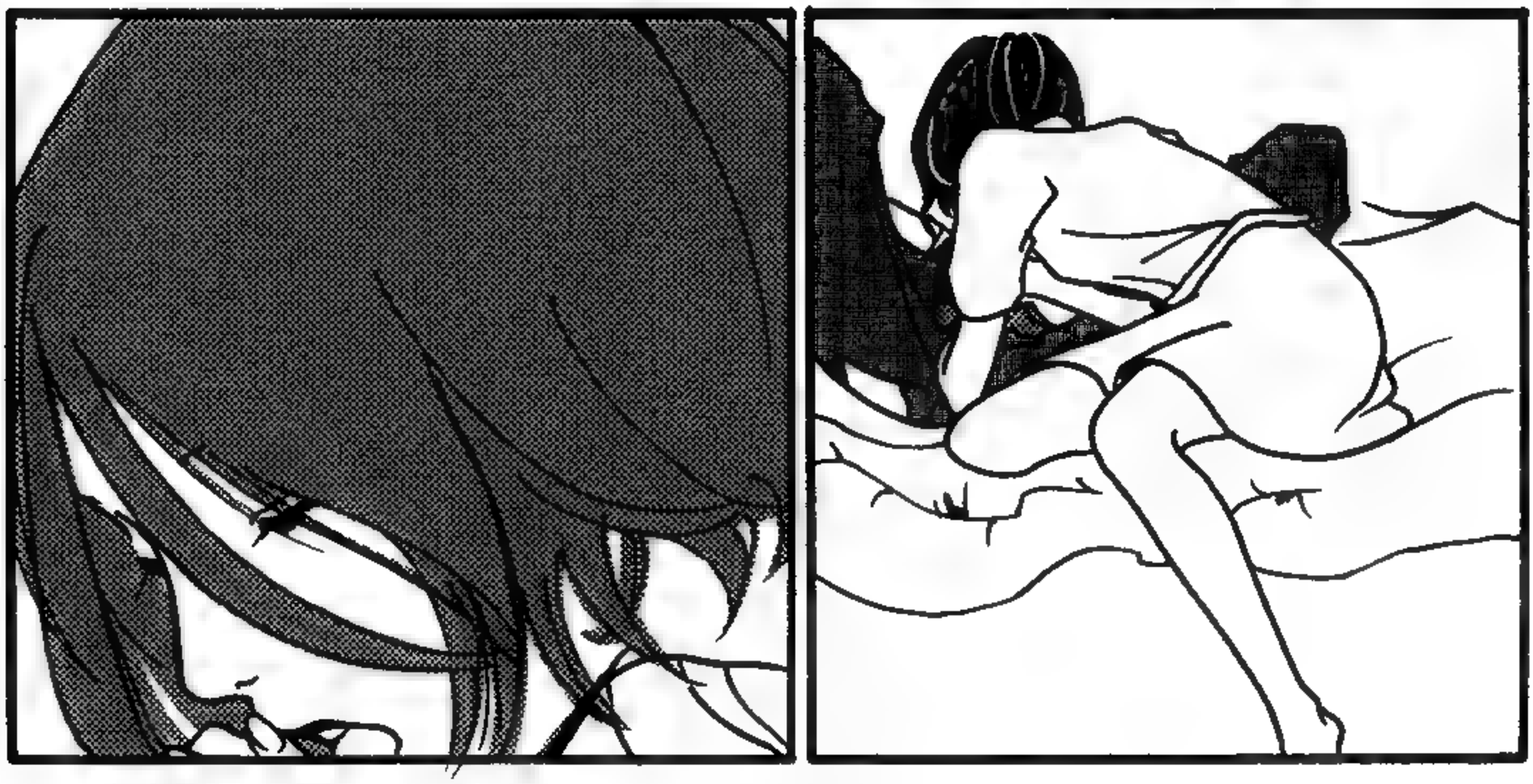
I know the pleasure of feeling the
warmth of a person you're in love with.

Just that, it hurts too, but...

It's enough

Enough for me.





I MEAN PSYCHOLO-GICALLY.

WHAT?

YOU'RE GONNA LAY ME?

I'VE WANTED TO DO IT WITH YOU FOR SO LONG.

I AIN'T MAKING FUN OF YOU.

...

TELL ME...

IF THIS WASN'T MY FIRST TIME, WOULD YOU DO EVERYTHING THE SAME WAY?

YOU'RE GOOD AT DOING THAT.

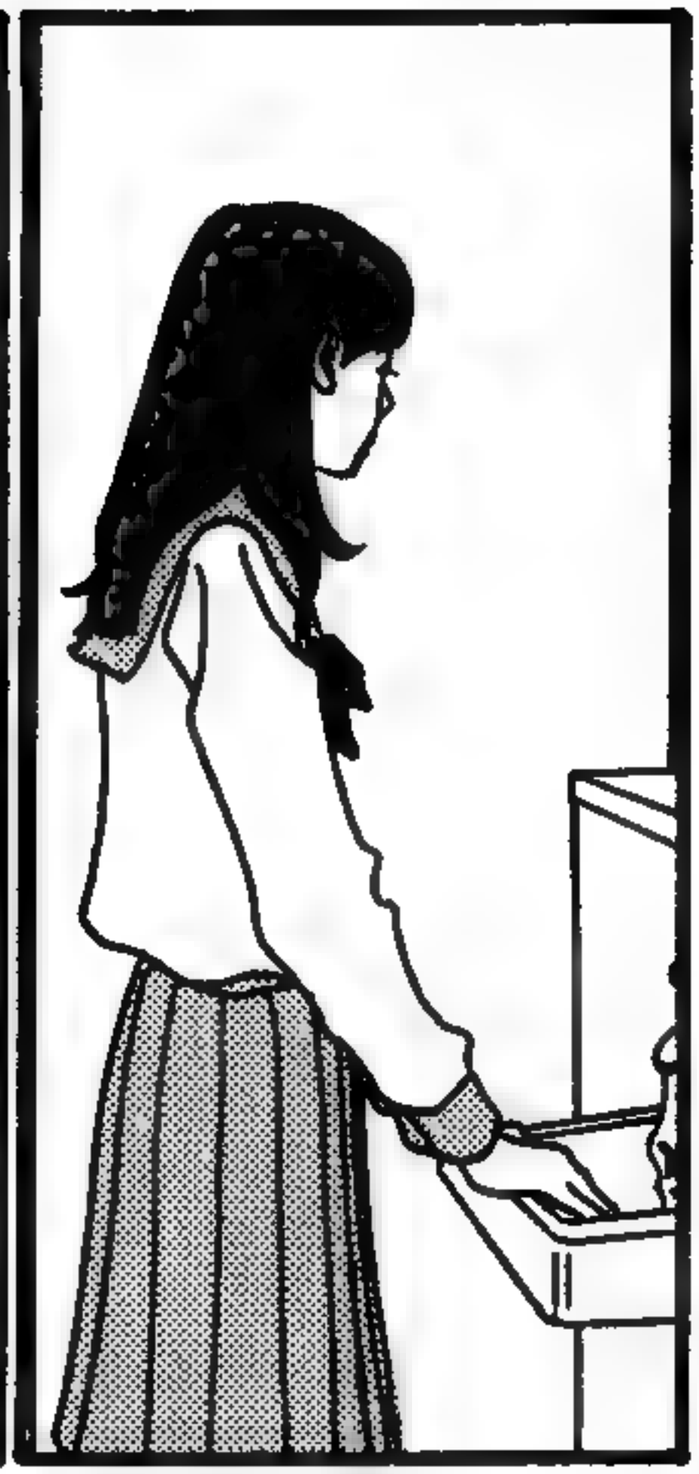
NOT LIKE I HAD ANYTHING TO IT COM-PARE WITH THOUGH.

YOU'RE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE SITUATION, AREN'T YOU?

Being alone after such gentle moments, I'm feeling so lost

It scares me.

Fear, Fear, Fear.

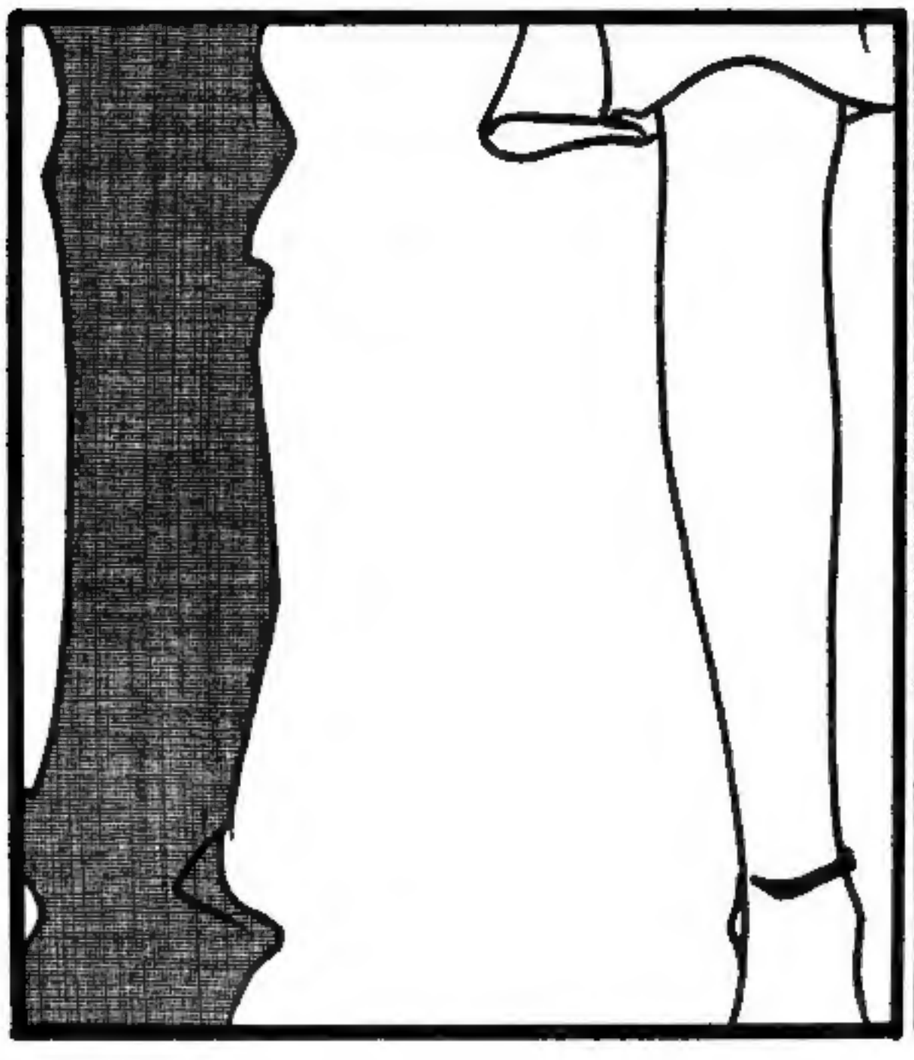


Barely being inside me...

. Yukio came.

After that my head was totally empty. Then Yukio layed on me. He kissed me, everywhere.

Of course, he was clumsy, but when he got inside me, I was happy. And after a short while, till he came, I screamed with pleasure.



WHAT'S THAT?

HERE.

BY THE WAY...

DID I PAY IT?

MY SHARE OF THE HOTEL BILL.

HA HA HA

HA HA HA

NOT REALLY.

DON'T YOU REMEM-BER?

YOU ALREADY GOT ANY PLANS FOR TODAY?

HEY, TELL ME...

IF YOU DON'T, WE COULD GO TO THE CINEMA?

DUNNO, BUT...

WE COULD GO EAT SOME-WHERE BEFORE...

HM ...

WELL ...

THEY GOT SO-METHING NICE?

WHAT? SUDDENLY YOU CAN EAT? I THOUGHT YOU FELT SOOO SICK?!?

BUT NOW I'M FEELING HUNGRY.

The movie was boring, but we laughed much,
always telling each other how dumb it was.
And we went side by side.

We did things, that one can't talk much about.
As if nothing had happened, we talked about
our studies, about friends and acquaintances...

We went side by side, and it was great.

And someday, as if
it was the most natural,
we went holding hands.